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# HANDBOOKS

FOR

# BIBLE CLASSES.

EDITED BY

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*THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.*

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# THE EPISTLE

TO

# THE HEBREWS.

With Introduction and Notes

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# CONTENTS.

## INTRODUCTION.


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| HAP. I.—THE READERS OF THE EPISTLE, | 9 |
| HAP. II.—THE EPISTLE ITSELF, | 18 |
| HAP. III.—THE AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE, | 25 |


## EXPOSITION.


| | |
|---|---|
| OTES ON CHAPS. I.–II., | 35 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON THE SON, | 73 |
| OTES ON CHAPS. III.–IV. 13, | 80 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON THE REST OF GOD, | 97 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON THE WORD OF GOD, | 101 |
| OTES ON CHAPS. IV. 14–VI., | 104 |
| OTES ON CHAP. VII., | 129 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST, | 146 |
| OTES ON CHAP. VIII., | 155 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON THE TWO COVENANTS, | 161 |
| OTES ON CHAPS. IX.–X. 18, | 168 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON DAY OF ATONEMENT, | 196 |
| XTENDED NOTE ON PURGE, SANCTIFY, ETC., | 203 |
| OTES ON CHAPS. X. 19-XII., | 209 |
| OTES ON CHAP. XIII., | 250 |

# INTRODUCTION.

## Chap. I. The Readers of the Epistle.

**1. The readers themselves.**—In our English Bibles the Epistle has he heading: "Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews;" and t the end there stands the remark: "Written to the Hebrews from taly by Timothy." In the best MSS. the heading reads simply, *To he Hebrews*, and the remark at the end is wanting, or agrees with ie superscription. The heading "To the Hebrews" is the proper eading of the Epistle, and is found from the time that the Epistle s historically mentioned in connection with other New Testament ooks. It has been supposed that the Epistle was also known under ther designations, as, *To the Laodiceans*, or, *To the Alexandrians*, ut this seems incapable of proof. Though as old as the first hisorical mention of the Epistle in connection with other New Testaient books, the inscription *To the Hebrews* does not come from the and of the original writer of the Epistle. It originated, no doubt, n the course of transcription, and whether it rests on tradition or was uggested by the contents of the Epistle cannot be ascertained. ny one reading the Epistle now would stamp it with the same title, part from all tradition respecting its origin or destination.

The term "Hebrews" is used in a wider and in a narrower sense. n a wider sense, it describes all who were descendants of Abraham, herever they resided, and whatever language they spoke. In this ense it is equivalent to Israelites and opposed to Gentiles (comp. Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5). In its narrower sense, it describes Jews ving in Palestine and using the native language of that country. In

this sense it is opposed to "Grecians" or Hellenists, that is, foreig
Jews, speaking Greek (Acts vi. 1, ix. 27). There is nothing to deter
mine in which of these senses the term is used in the superscriptio
to the Epistle. The Alexandrians understood by it Palestinian Jews
but this is merely their interpretation, and can hardly be assumed t
rest on tradition. The phrase "To the Hebrews" might mean o
itself that the Epistle was addressed to all Christians of Jewis
extraction; but the local colour of the Epistle is very distinct, an
the allusions are of such a kind as to make it certain that the Epistl
was addressed to "Hebrews" in a particular locality. No allusio
is made in the Epistle to Gentile believers, and this seems to impl
that it was written to a community consisting exclusively of Jewis
Christians, or one at least in which the Hebrew element very greatl
predominated. The Author's view is no doubt that the Hebrews t
whom he writes are the true and rightful successors of the Ol
Testament church; they are "the People" of God, and they are s
as believing Hebrews. But this way of regarding them, even thoug
it be based on principles recognised in other New Testament writing
(Rom. xi.), would have had something unnatural in it if they had bee
a minority in the church or circle of churches to which the letter wa
addressed. Thus all the information which we gather from th
inscription to the Epistle is, that it was addressed to Christia
believers of the race of Israel—a conclusion which we could hav
reached apart from any inscription.

**2. Their circumstances.**—The Hebrews to whom the Epistle wa
addressed had not been themselves hearers of the Lord, but ha
received the gospel from those who heard Him (ii. 3), and wh
worked many wonders in attestation of their preaching (ii. 4). Th
church had not apparently been founded by mere believers fro
Palestine congregating in numbers in the locality, but by som
apostolic missionaries, themselves direct hearers of the Lord (ii.
xiii. 7; comp. x. 32, where their enlightenment is referred to as
distinct historical event). Their conversion to the faith of Christ wa
a thing that, when the Epistle was written, had long taken place: fo
on account of the time, they ought themselves to have been teache
(v. 12); those who brought the gospel to them were already dea
(xiii. 7); and their history had been one of varied vicissitudes, for o

e back of their first faith they had been subjected to sharp perse-
tions (x. 32), though presumably their later history, until recently
i. 4, 11–13), had been more peaceful. Their former persecutions,
ough in the midst of them they had been subjected to great
proach and loss of goods, and even imprisonment in some quarters,
d perhaps not gone so far as to carry any of them to the stake
32 with xii. 4, see notes). In the early days of their faith, they
d shown much enthusiasm and public spirit, taking joyfully the
oiling of their goods, and voluntarily sharing the reproaches and
mpathizing with the bonds of those who suffered in the Christian
use (x. 33, 34); and this spirit of sympathy and love to their
ffering brethren, which had been their characteristic always, con-
ued to distinguish them when this Apostle addressed them (comp.
till do minister," vi. 10, with "let brotherly love continue," xiii. 1).
Nevertheless, in these later days, a change for the worse had come
er them. External circumstances were perhaps beginning again to
ess heavily upon them, and their condition of mind was not, as it
d been in former times, such as to enable them to bear up success-
ly against them. Nothing very specific is said in the Epistle to
dicate the nature or cause of their trials, but the whole tone of it is
rtatory, suitable to persons in the midst of afflictions from without;
d, on the other hand, the many solemn warnings against unbelief
d falling away from the faith of Christ reveal the condition of
nd in which they were, and the fears of the Apostle in regard to
em. The reproach which they suffered was one no doubt common
the people of God in all ages (xi. 25, 26), but it was something
ore specific, it was the reproach of Christ, and borne at the hands
their own countrymen (xiii. 13). The Apostle tells them they have
ed of patience (x. 36); he admits that their Christian course is a
rd race (xii. 1); their afflictions are severe, and he endeavours to
t them in such a light as will more than reconcile them to them,—
ey are not accidents, they are the chastisements of a Father, and
oof of their true sonship, common to them with all sons, and
leed with the Son Himself (xii. 7–10, xii. 2); he sets before them
e example of the great worthies of former days, Abraham (vi. 15)
d the cloud of witnesses, who patiently endured and are now made
rfect (chap. xi.); and, above all, he reminds them that they have a

great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who can be touched wit
the feeling of their infirmities, and exhorts them to come with confi
dence to the throne of grace, to obtain help in time of need (iv
14–16, v. 1–5, xii. 2–4). The passage xii. 4, "Ye have not resiste
unto blood," is of somewhat uncertain meaning (see notes), thoug
the natural sense is that they had not yet been persecuted unt
death, and, from the Apostle's manner of regarding the communit
as a moral person having a continuous history (v. 11–14, vi. 10–1
x. 32–37, xiii. 7), this seems to be said of their whole life as
church.

These severe trials their condition of mind unhappily made ther
ill fitted to meet. Though they had been so long enlightened tha
they ought to have been themselves teachers, they had again nee
that some one should teach them the first elements of Christia
truth (v. 12); they had become children in intelligence, having nee
of milk, and were incapable of receiving such solid food as thi
Apostle desired to offer them when he wished to bring the Me
chizedek priesthood of the Son before them; they were growin
sluggish, and no more imitators of the faith and patience of thos
who inherit the promises (vi. 12). This want of interest was leadin
them to cease to frequent the Christian meetings for mutual confi
mation and edifying (x. 25). They were casting away their joyf
confidence (x. 35). And besides this general coldness that wa
creeping over them, there were perhaps some symptoms showin
themselves of a mistrust of their teachers, and suspicion of the
teaching, possibly owing to influences from without (xiii. 17, 18),—
which influences may also have been due a tendency to busy then
selves with meats, and to be carried aside by strange teaching
forgetful of the teaching of those who first spoke to them the Wo
of God (xiii. 7–9). This more negative backsliding seemed to th
Apostle, and indeed was, on its other side, something positive. The
were in danger of drifting away from the things which had bee
heard, the revelation of the Son (ii. 1). From the particularity of th
writer's language, it seems not improbable that he has instances
his eye,—there was need to take heed lest there should be in *any o*
of them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living G
(iii. 12, iv. 1); lest there should be any root of bitterness amo

em, or any profane person like Esau, having more respect to
orldly advantages and sensual pleasures than the holy blessings
the covenant (xii. 16), and lest by such evil example the commu-
ty should be defiled (xii. 15). In the light of this state of mind,
d of the external circumstances, there seemed to the Apostle, in
e whole situation, not only the possibility, but the hazard of their
ling away altogether from the faith of the gospel.

3. **Their locality.** — In xiii. 12, it is said that Jesus suffered
thout the gate, *i.e.* the gate of Jerusalem. Such an allusion to
rusalem would be understood by all Hebrews, whether natives of
lestine or born abroad, and cannot be used as evidence in regard
the locality of those here addressed. Beyond the reference in the
ords, "they of Italy salute you" (xiii. 24), no allusion is made to
y locality by name. "They of Italy" means those belonging to
aly, and the words might be said of such persons whether they
ere, when spoken of, in Italy or out of it. The mention of them of
aly, however, seems to imply one of two things: either the author of
e Epistle wrote from Italy, and added to his own the salutations of
e Christians there, or he wrote to some locality in Italy, and sent
e salutations of some Italian brethren, who were beside him, to the
urch of their native country. No other reason for such a special
ference to them of Italy suggests itself naturally. The Epistle
ems to have been written from or to Italy.

1. An opinion widely received has been, that the Epistle was
itten from Italy to the church of Jerusalem. This opinion has
nerally gone along with the view that St. Paul was the writer.
e two opinions have no necessary connection, and the question
authorship had better be kept separate. It is difficult to reconcile
s opinion, in regard to the destination of the Epistle, with many
ngs said in it. In ii. 3, it is said that the Hebrews owed their
owledge of the great salvation not to the Lord Himself, but to
m who heard Him. At whatever date the Epistle was written,
re must have been many persons living in the church at Jerusalem
o had heard Christ Himself; and, besides, the church seems
rywhere treated as having throughout its history a personal
ntity. Elsewhere (x. 32), the "enlightenment" of the Hebrews is
ken of as a distinct historical event, and in a manner scarcely

applicable to the ministry of our Lord. Again, the low condition
Christian knowledge in the community (v. 11) can scarcely be su
posed that of the original church at Jerusalem, and the reproach, th
for the time they ought to have been teachers, sounds very strange
if said of a community from which teachers had gone out to a
the world. The passage xii. 4, if its meaning be the natural on
supported, too, by x. 32–35, that the church addressed had not y
furnished any martyrs to the cause of Christ, is decisive against th
Jerusalem address; and the passage xiii. 7 does not suggest that th
end of the life of the leaders there referred to had been a violent on
If "ministering to the saints" were used in the restricted sense, whic
it sometimes has in the Pauline Epistles, of relieving the poor believe
in Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 25; 1 Cor. xvi. 1), this would also be decisi
against the church at Jerusalem; but perhaps vi. 10 is to be e
plained by the more expanded reference x. 32–34; comp. xiii. 1–
The internal history of the church at Jerusalem is not very w
known. It is certainly not improbable that there may have been
more liberal element in it, composed of men in whom the spirit
Stephen was reflected, and among whom his opinions were perpet
ated. But this Epistle is not addressed to any section of Hebrew
and the writer at the same time evidently feels that, on the whol
he has his readers on his side. The natural sense of ii. 3 is, that t
Author, as well as his readers, had heard the gospel from apostol
missionaries. He may not have been a native of the locality, thou
it is possible that he was; he had at least lived for a time in it, a
enjoyed a position of consideration in the church, to which he hop
soon to be restored (xiii. 19). It is difficult to suggest any period
the history of the Jerusalem church during which a liberal-mind
Hellenist like the Author, who was probably ignorant of Hebrew, a
who could in an off-hand way dispose of the whole Old Testame
ritual as "standing on meats and drinks and divers washings" (ix.
and "useless" (vii. 18), could have stood in such relations to t
church, or at which his restoration to it along with Timothy, t
devoted attendant of St. Paul, could be looked forward to as an ev
(xiii. 19, 23). No doubt, in many respects his method of reasoni
differs from that of St. Paul, and the manner in which he teach
that Judaism is sublimed and transfigured in Christianity might

s offensive than the doctrine that the Law was a mere side institu-
n, brought in that sin might abound, and not strictly in the line of
vation at all (Rom. v. 20; Gal. iii. 19). Nevertheless, he disposes
Moses and the "customs" no less effectively than St. Paul does;
d though he may be rather to be named a successor of Stephen
n a follower of St. Paul, Acts vii. and xxi. alike show what such
ching had to look for at Jerusalem.

The positive arguments in favour of Jerusalem are of little weight.
is thought that only there, or in the neighbourhood, could a com-
nity consisting exclusively of Jewish believers have been found.
is not necessary to suppose that the church consisted exclusively
Hebrews. The Author regards Hebrews as truly the church, not
a matter of numbers, but on principle; and probably in many
urches at this time Jews were in the majority. Further, it is sup-
sed that only in Jerusalem could the people be devoted to the prac-
e of the Temple rites as those addressed are supposed to be. But
oof, or even probability, that those addressed were engaged in the
*actice* of the Temple worship, is altogether wanting. The Epistle
ntains no allusion to the Temple, nor to the service as actually
actised there. Its references to the Mosaic ritual are purely ideal
d theoretical, and based on the Law in the Pentateuch. It refers
the ark, the pot of manna, and other things that never existed in
second Temple. The mode of reasoning adopted would have
en as valid after the destruction of the Temple as during its exist-
ce; and in point of fact the same mode of reference is found in
vish writings long after the Temple and the service there had come
an end. It is possible that the persons addressed had a theoretical
erest in the Temple services and the customs. These were the
ional worship, and all members of the nation, wherever they might
scattered abroad, partook in them in sympathy and heart, regard-
them as the symbol and guarantee of their national and religious
ty. At all events, nothing in the Epistle indicates a closer con-
tion of the Hebrews with them than this feeling, common to
brews in general. The passage, xiii. 7–13, is of doubtful meaning.
t no interpretation of it favours Jerusalem. If the "divers and
nge teachings" there mentioned refer to the "meats" of sacrifi-
offerings, it is scarcely possible that such language could be used

of practices to which the Hebrews had been addicted all their lives and if the reference be to ascetic tendencies, it is scarcely in Jerusalem but elsewhere, that we are to seek the original home of such errors.

2. Failing Jerusalem, it has been thought that Rome answered th conditions of the problem better than any other locality, and th Epistle is now considered by many eminent writers to have bee addressed to the Jewish portion of the Roman church, or to th Roman church in general, which was probably largely composed Hebrews. (*a*) In this way the salutation of "them of Italy" is satis factorily explained—they were Italians present with the writer i some place out of Italy. (*b*) The Epistle was very early known Rome, being largely made use of by Clement of Rome before the en of the first century. (*c*) The interest of the church in Timothy readily understood. (*d*) The Author's presumed familiarity with th Epistle to the Romans is easily explained (see on x. 30). (*e*) Th allusion to meats (xiii. 7) indicates an ascetic tendency such as exposed in Rom. xiv., and the divers and strange teachings (xiii. are such as were to be expected in a city which was the intellectu centre of the world, and, naturally, a hotbed of speculations an heresies, and from which in fact proceeded many strange opinion which distracted the early church, and fill some of the most interes ing pages of her history. And (*f*) it is known that at an earl period, about the year 50, the Jews, that is, probably the Christia Jews, were expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius, a fa which might explain the allusion to loss of goods and the like (x. 32

Some of these considerations are not without weight; others ha very little force. Even if the reference in xiii. 7, etc., were to ascet tendencies, which is far from certain, the Epistle to the Colo sians, and the whole history of the age, show that such mor developments were to be found in many places. The most that ca be said is, that they were found in Rome also.

On the other hand, there are difficulties not easy to surmount the way of the Roman theory. The church at Rome was probab founded, not by the preaching of any apostolic man, but by the co gregating there of believers from Palestine and other parts of t world (Acts ii. 10). The Hebrews, on the contrary, were eva gelized by hearers of the Lord, amidst many signs and wonders a

fts of the Holy Ghost (ii. 3, 4; comp. Acts viii. 6, xiv. 3). Elsehere, x. 32, their enlightenment is referred to as a distinct historical vent; and these two things together naturally suggest that the Iebrews received the gospel from some apostolic men in the course f a special missionary tour. Further, the Epistle must have been ritten sometime, and it is usually thought only a very few years, fter the Neronic persecution (A.D. 64 and after). Close upon their nlightenment the Hebrews sustained a great conflict of sufferings . 32). These are referred to in the Epistle distantly as the "former ays." The reference can scarcely be to the persecutions of Nero. n the other hand, if Roman Christians are addressed, it is impossible that all reference to these persecutions should be awanting. Ve can find a way out of this difficulty only by desperate shifts. We ust suppose that the afflictions alluded to in x. 32 are the Neronic ersecutions; then, that the Author assumed that these followed close pon the conversion of the Roman church, which he must have garded as a definite historical occurrence, and due to the preaching f the Apostle Paul and perhaps Peter; and finally, that the Epistle as not written for a very considerable number of years after this eriod. The date of the Epistle is no doubt uncertain. But if the uthor made the above assumptions, he must have read history in a range way; and if, as is supposed, he was familiar with St. Paul's pistle to the Romans, he must have perused the work of his master ith very little attention, especially that part of it where he mentions embers of the Roman church who were of note among the apostles, nd in Christ before him (xvi. 7). Neither are the terms of x. 32 dequate to describe the ferocious cruelties of the Neronic persecuon; and, as has been said, the passage xiii. 7 does not imply death y violent means, comp. on xii. 4. Again, it is difficult to find in istory a time at which the Roman church, the most lively and igorous of the churches, could be described in the terms employed v. 11. St. Paul, writing to the Romans, says, "Your faith is poken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. i. 8; comp. xvi. 19), hile this Author says, "Ye are become dull of hearing, and have need f milk"—faith, as the whole Epistle shows, is just what he regards e Hebrews as lacking in. Once more, the Roman Judaism, as we now it from the Epistle to the Romans, was of the usual Pharisaic

type. It is possible indeed that St. Paul the Pharisee found Pharisai Judaism everywhere, as he conceived it under that aspect, and tha this Author, the Hellenist, contemplated Judaism under anothe aspect, a Judaism with an allegorical tendency, which resolved th "customs" into ideas and principles, and was not bound fast t external practice. But while there may be truth in this, it is plai that the Author assumes that his readers will go along with him i most of his opinions, and that the type of Judaism exhibited in th Epistle is real.

3. Others have thought of **Alexandria**. Naturally Alexandria, a the centre of Hellenistic Judaism, offers what answers to the condi tions of the problem in *general*. But no particular trait in the Epistl seems to point to Alexandria. The elaborate attempts that have bee made to show that the Author was unacquainted with the details c the Temple service at Jerusalem, and that his references agree wit the practice of the Jewish Temple at Leontopolis in Egypt, hardl deserve mention. Though the Epistle was early known and highl valued among the Alexandrians, no trace of the opinion appears tha they were the recipients of it. On the contrary, the prevailing trad tion in Alexandria, connected with the belief of its Pauline autho ship, was that the Epistle was addressed to the Hebrews of Palestin

Upon the whole, while nothing approaching to certainty can b reached, some community of the Dispersion in the East,—not, hov ever, Jerusalem, nor any church in its immediate neighbourhood,- with a Hellenistic type of Judaism, best suits the circumstances the case. The imprisonment of Timothy (xiii. 23) would probably h in Rome, or somewhere in Italy, and the letter was probably addresse from that country, whither the Author had gone, either on a missiona enterprise or on some other call, and where he was waiting to b joined by Timothy when he wrote it. This might account for th letter being so early known in Rome, and for the consistent deni there of its Pauline authorship.

## CHAP. II. THE EPISTLE ITSELF.

**1. Occasion of the Epistle.** — The condition of the Hebrews h already been described generally in chap. i. sect. 2. This cond

ion was the occasion of writing the Epistle. There is difficulty in inding anything much more definite than is there said.

The Epistle does not fit itself into the frame of the Pauline contro-ersies with the Judaizers in the Christian church. Its subject is not question of a gospel free of ceremonies as against a gospel encum-ered by them. The Author's position toward the Law is without loubt identical with that of St. Paul, although he possibly reached hat position by a different road. The ceremonial observances are in is view in themselves worthless (vii. 18, x. 1–4); they were meant to e nothing more than temporary (ix. 8–10, viii. 13); and God Himself n Old Testament Scripture has abrogated them (vii. 18, x. 9); and he believing Hebrews are exhorted to sever all connection with their ountrymen still practising them (xiii. 13). It seems not improb-ble even that the missionaries who evangelized the Hebrews had reached this free gospel (xiii. 7–10), and that the gospel had been ccepted from them by the Hebrews in this sense, although perhaps ithout perfect comprehension of the bearing of such principles upon ne Old Testament ritual; for the Author's object is not to secure an dvance on their part from a position hitherto occupied to a higher, ut to lead them back to a former position from which they had llen, or at least to confirm them in a position from which they were in anger of falling. This danger, however, was not merely that of falling om a free gospel down to one encumbered with ceremonies. It was ot a movement from a higher position to a lower, but still within the hristian church, that was threatened; it was a movement towards mething outside Christianity. The danger was that of renouncing ne faith of Christ altogether. This is evident from the language nployed (notes on vi. 7, 8). No doubt St. Paul, when writing to entiles, uses very strong language regarding the ceremonies of the aw, calling the receiving of them a falling from grace, and the eaching of them another gospel (Gal. v. 4, i. 6); yet this relentless xposure, from the point of view of principle, of acts of the true eaning of which those who practised them were unconscious, and ho still adhered to the Christian church, is very different from the escription given in this Epistle of the conscious indignities to the hristian faith and the Son of God, which the Apostle dreads on the art of those to whom he refers (comp. iii. 12, vi. 6 x. 26–29).

If, as is usually supposed, the danger which the Apostle sought to avert was a relapse of the Hebrews into Judaism, whether this was a Judaism that still held fast to the hope of Israel, though not according to knowledge, a thing with which St. Paul was able to sympathize (Rom. x. 2; Acts xxiii. 6–9), or rather a Judaism like that of the Sadducean high priest who crucified the Son of God (John xix. 15; Heb. vi. 6, x. 29), perhaps no special occurrence or circumstance calling forth the Epistle need be sought. The depressed condition of the Hebrew Christians in general, the overbearing attitude of their countrymen, the imposing memories of the national religion, the long delay of Christ's coming, and the imperfect understanding on the part of the Hebrews of the meaning of the Christian atonement,—these were all constant forces which circumstances of no great importance in themselves might at any moment aggravate so as to render the situation perilous. On the other hand, the free views of this Apostle are not views which he has been led now only to form, or which he expresses now for the first time. And yet in some sense he belonged to the community of the Hebrews, and they sympathized in general with his teaching. It is, therefore, not impossible that in the passage xiii. 7–10, so important and yet so difficult to estimate, we have a hint of the occasion that called forth the Epistle, though everywhere else the immediate motive of it is kept in the background. Chap. xiii. indicates throughout a certain strain in the relations of the Hebrews to their teachers and to the writer. And this may have been due to external influences (xiii. 9). These influences, however, were but a single force among many, all bearing in the same direction; and this may account for the somewhat oblique manner in which they are referred to.

Others have sought a more definite occasion in the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple. Though not actually engaged in the practice of the Temple worship, the Hebrews may still have regarded this as the bond of their national unity, and the symbol of their continued covenant relation to the God of their fathers, a relation within which their Christian faith itself was professed. The overthrow of the Temple services shattered this bond, and threatened to shake the foundations of their faith in general. And the object of the Epistle is supposed to be to meet this despair, by showing that this dissolution of the

ational service had been predicted and prepared for in the Old estament, as history had now accomplished it, and that their Chris-an faith, instead of being involved in its fall, rose to its true place ove its ruins. This view suits much that is said in the Epistle ually well with the other view, though it sets the whole in a different ght. Any positive grounds for such a theory, however, are difficult find. Such a despair ought to have seized all Hebrews alike, hether Christians or not; but there is no historical evidence of such thing. The danger threatened in such a case would be utter irre-gion, akin to heathenism. But the Author, instead of warning his ebrews against this, exhorts them to sever their connection wholly ith their countrymen still adhering to the ancient faith (xiii. 13). nd such expressions as, "Fall away from the living God" (iii. 12), "Ye ave need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the *oracles* f God" (v. 12), which have been appealed to as proof that the Hebrews ere in danger of falling away from more than what was distinctively hristian, do not support such a conclusion (see notes on iii. 12, v. 12). Any difference of opinion on this point will not greatly affect our eading of the Epistle now, as the Apostle's positive argument for the nality and perfection of the Christian faith will be left untouched, lthough this argument will be set in a different light in the two cases. f what he seeks to avert be a relapse into Judaism, then his exposi-on will be more an argument for Christianity as against the ancient ith; if what he seeks to meet be the danger of a more fundamental lling away from faith in revealed truth on the whole, caused by the ock given to the religious mind through the removal of all visible kens of the truth of its faith, his exposition will be more an argu-ent to the effect that the Christian faith has risen to its true place nd full perfection out of the ashes of the former religion.

2. **The Epistle itself.**—The Author's general religious conceptions ave been learned from the Old Testament. These conceptions pply the moulds into which his New Testament truth is run. The ld Testament conceptions no doubt appear in the somewhat eveloped form which they had in the Jewish schools of his day; t this development has not materially altered them, though it has ven some of them, *e.g.* the idea of the two ages or worlds, a more onounced form. Traces of his Alexandrian culture have been left

upon his language, and perhaps in some places upon his thought. His method of Old Testament exegesis must be understood. Prophecies of the kind which we call "typical" are unknown to him; the Old Testament speaks directly to the Christian age. In his view the Tabernacle and its contents and services were typical, or rather anti-typical, being made off the type seen in the mount, but all prophecy, whether Messianic or of other kinds, is direct. Hence in his use of the Old Testament he never consciously *accommodates* or applies Old Testament Scripture to New Testament relations. He draws lessons from Old Testament examples, as Abraham (vi. 15), the cloud of witnesses (ch. xi.), or, on the other side, Esau (xii. 16), and the principles that came to light in God's dealing with the people under the first covenant are *à fortiori* valid in the second (ii. 3, x. 28); but the Old Testament passages which he applies to the Son (i. 5–14, ii. 11–13, x. 5–10, etc.), or to the people of God, as Ps. xcv. in chap. iii., Prov. iii. 11 in ch. xii. 5, are considered to have been spoken directly to the subjects to which he applies them.

The Epistle is written to Christian Hebrews. These Christian Hebrews are in the Author's view the People of God. They have been sanctified to be God's worshipping people through the blood of the new covenant, the offering of the Son. This People of God is in danger, under manifold trials, of hardening their heart into unbelief, and falling away from the living God—God, into whose perfect fellowship they have been brought in the new covenant. The Epistle is written to avert this danger. It is, as the writer calls it, a word of exhortation (xiii. 22). It is a sustained appeal to the Christian Hebrews, the People of God, to hold fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end (iii. 6, 14, etc.). The key-note of the Epistle is struck and heard throughout in the hortatory parts, to which the doctrinal elements are subservient. Religion being conceived under the idea of a covenant between God and men, that is, a state of relation between God and a people who worship Him, the idea of the Epistle is that the faith of Christ is the true and final religion; in other words, that by the one offering of the Son of God the sins of the People (ii. 17), or the transgressions under the first covenant (ix. 15), have been finally put away (ix. 26); and that in the entrance of the Son, the representative high priest of the People, through His

ood, into the sanctuary on high, within the veil, God's very dwelling-
ace, the eternal covenant state has been in fact realized, as it
ntinues for ever expressed in His sitting at the right hand of the
ajesty, and being manifested now before the face of God for us
. 24). This is the one thought of the Epistle, which combines with
e exhortation and sustains it in a hundred ways. It has usually
en said that the purpose of the Apostle is to demonstrate the supe-
rity of the new covenant to the first. But this representation
rdly does justice to the positive side of his idea, the finality of the
cond covenant, which is the main element of his thought, though
is finality is worked out and exhibited through a series of contrasts
th the first covenant. Through these contrasts not only the cove-
nt state, actually realized and existing, but the various steps that
d to its initiation, are illustrated. The reasons which induced the
uthor to give his Epistle this shape readily suggest themselves
reliminary notes to chap. i.).

Of these great contrasts there are three—(1) that between Jesus, the
n, head of the "world to come," the world of salvation, and the
gels, heads of "this world," the Old Testament pre-Christian dis-
ensation of things (ch. i.–ii.); (2) that between Jesus and Moses, the
e Son over the house of God, the other servant within it (ch. iii.–
. 13); and (3) that between the Son, the Melchizedek high priest,
d the Old Testament Levitical or Aaronic high priest (ch. iv. 14–
18). In the last are exhibited the steps that led to the dedication
the new covenant, and issued in that perfect covenant state now
isting, of which Jesus, the ever-living high priest, is the surety, and
hich is the means towards realizing the promises of salvation (ix. 15).
the second He who is Son over the house of God is exhibited in
is conduct of the people towards this heritage of salvation, the
rld to come, the rest of God. And in the first He is presented as
ead over this world to come, the eternal world of true things that
nnot be shaken, the second and abiding universal dispensation of
od.

The Author in this way pursues the reverse course from that which
e might have anticipated. But though the three sections be cha-
cterized by the prevailing ideas referred to, these ideas are not kept
stinct, but run through all the sections more or less. The writer,

however, begins with the broadest contrast first, and descends successively to those that are narrower.

Section 1, chap. i.–ii., is a contrast of the two "ages" or worlds, God's two great and universal dispensations, chiefly in the persons of those who are their respective heads, the Son and the angels—the point being that the last, the Christian, is as much higher than the other as its head, the Son, Messianic King, and great High Priest, is higher than the angels. God having spoken to us through His Son, has made Him heir of all things, the world to come, the final condition of things, the world of things themselves that cannot be shaken. This headship is the meeting-point of two lines. It was befitting Him, as Son and Maker of the worlds (i. 2); He is Messianic King (i. 5–14). But it was reached also along another line, His moral work in the flesh. This lordship over all things was destined of God for man, and is his salvation. The Son entered into the life of man, and rose to it along the line of man's history, with its sufferings; He was crowned with glory because He suffered death (ii. 9). But all this He underwent, not as an isolated moral individual, but as the leader of salvation, that He might taste death for every man—He is great High Priest.—And the section closes with an apologetic passage designed to show that it befitted God, when He brought many sons to glory, to lay such sufferings on the Son, as they were necessary if He was to be the Author of salvation to sinful mortal men (ii. 10–18).

Section 2, chap. iii.–iv. 13. Through His sufferings the Son became a merciful high priest, able to succour those tempted (ii. 18). To this idea the second section attaches itself, opening with the exhortation to the Hebrews to consider this Apostle and High Priest of their confession the Son over the house of God, and faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses was, as a servant, in all the house. He has attained to greater glory than Moses, and is faithful, and they who hold fast their confession will reach the promised heritage, the Rest of God. Israel fell short through unbelief. But God gave a new promise of the Rest, and fixed a new time for entering it (Ps. xcv.), when He said, "To-day, if ye shall hear His voice." This To-day is the Christian age, and this voice of God is His voice speaking in His Son (i. 1, ii. 1). The purpose of this section is to identify the revelation of the Son

ith that voice of God, promising the Rest anew, spoken of in the ld Testament; and the Christian age with the "to-day" there men- oned; and the Christian salvation with the Rest of God, promised new; and to show that through faith of Christ the Rest is reached— e who believed do enter into the Rest.

Section 3, chap. iv. 14–xii. 29. The first section showed that in ie Son made perfect *through sufferings* the salvation of man (as epicted in Ps. viii.) was attained. The second section exhorted to ie consideration of this Son, *over* the house of God, the great leader ward this salvation, the Rest of God, and appealed to the Hebrews hold fast their confession, and not sin through disbelief, as Israel, n their way to the Rest. Coming ever closer to them, the Apostle ndicates how they may receive such help as will enable them to hold ast their confession, even by coming, through their great High riest, to the throne of grace. This starts the third and greatest ection, the doctrinal part of which lies in ch. iv. 14–x. 18, and the ractical in x. 19–xii. 29, and the theme of which is the priesthood of ie Son. See outline at ch. iv. 14 and ch. viii. First, the Son is a ue sympathizing high priest; He is this in common with all true igh priests (iv. 14–v. 10); He learned through sufferings. Then omes a practical appeal (v. 11–vi. 20). Second, the Son is a Mel- hizedek high priest, a high priest for ever (ch. vii.); He is such a igh priest as *sat down* at the right hand of God; His ministry is nal, and the covenant it dedicates eternal. Third, this covenant, in ontrast with the first, is illustrated (ch. viii.). Fourth, then the two inistries, the Levitical and the Melchizedek, are contrasted (ch. ix. -14). And finally, the Son's offering as dedicating a new covenant is welt upon (ix. 15–x. 18). Then follows the practical and hortatory ortion, on which the Apostle lavishes all the skill and variety and ersuasiveness of his eloquence. See outline at x. 19, and notes on i. 22. And, finally, the Epistle ends with a chapter touching on ndry duties and personal relations (ch. xiii.).

## CHAP. III. AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE.

The main thing to be ascertained in regard to authorship is the ate of opinion in the early church at the period when traditions

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that may be called historical still existed. Unfortunately, even at the earliest time at which we find traditions they are not unmixed with conjecture. As time has gone on conjectures have multiplied, but no new facts have emerged. Virtually, the opinions found to prevail in the 2d and 3d centuries have continued to be entertained throughout the history of the church, at least in those periods at which the question of the authorship of the Epistle has been made the subject of serious consideration, as at the Reformation and in our own day. From the end of the 4th century and beginning of the 5th, that is, from the age of Jerome and Augustine, a condition of uninquiring acquiescence in the Pauline authorship ensued, and continued to prevail till disturbed by the more active spirit of the Reformation. The great Reformers, such as Luther and Calvin, expressed themselves very decidedly in opposition to the authorship of St. Paul. The Reformation age was again succeeded by another period of general acquiescence in the Pauline authorship, similar to that which followed the earliest age, and this acquiescence continued till the rise of the method of historical inquiry characteristic of our own age. The Reformation period made something like a positive contribution to the question in the felicitous conjecture of Luther that Apollos of Alexandria might be the author (Acts xviii. 24). The exhaustive investigations of modern times have set the question in all possible lights, and though they are far from having resulted in unanimity of sentiment, they may fairly be described as on the whole converging towards the negative conclusion that the writer of the Epistle was not the Apostle Paul.

In the earliest age we meet with *three* traditions, existing in three different localities—localities, however, which pretty much embrace the whole of the Christian world of that age. These are :—

1. **Rome** and the **western Roman world.** The consistent tradition here is that the Epistle is not St. Paul's.

2. **North Africa.** The tradition here is that the Epistle is by Barnabas.

3. **Alexandria** and perhaps **the East** in general. Here the tradition is that the Epistle belongs to St. Paul.

1. The earliest traces of the Epistle are found at Rome. **Clement** of Rome in his Epistle to the Corinthians makes large use of it

ɔting, as Eusebius says (*Hist.* iii. 38), and as Jerome repeats after
ı, its very words. It is supposed that the letter of Clement cannot
later than 96 A.D. Clement uses the Epistle much as he does
er New Testament writings, but nowhere refers to the author.
at Clement knew who the author was is possible; that he believed
ı to be an apostle does not follow from the use he makes of the
istle, nor yet that he regarded it as canonical. The conception
ı New Testament canon had hardly yet attained to any clearness.
ement's own Epistle was read in the Corinthian church every Lord's
y even toward the end of the 2d century.

The testimony of the Roman church is consistently against the
uline authorship. The fragment on the canon known as the Mura-
an fragment, supposed to belong to the second half of the 2d
tury, states that St. Paul wrote to seven churches, and enumerates
thirteen Epistles, that to the Hebrews being omitted.

The presbyter **Caius** of Rome (about 200), author of a treatise
inst Montanism, is cited by Eusebius (*Hist.* vi. 20) as in that
rk ascribing only thirteen Epistles to St. Paul, not reckoning the
istle to the Hebrews among the rest.

**renæus**, a native of Asia Minor and Bishop of Lyons, about the
ginning of the 3d century, in his work on *Heresies*, cites twelve of
Epistles of St. Paul, all except that to Philemon, but he nowhere
es or refers to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Eusebius (*Hist.* v. 26)
ntions a work of his in which he refers to the Epistle to the
brews and the book called the Wisdom of Solomon, but it is not
d that he considered the Epistle to be St. Paul's. Other writers,
doubt of a later date, expressly assert that Irenæus denied the
uline authorship of the Epistle.

Similarly it is affirmed, in regard to **Hippolytus**, a Roman bishop (of
ia), towards the middle of the 3d century, that he did not acknow-
ge the Pauline authorship of the Epistle.

Such testimonies need not be pursued further. Those cited show
opinion prevailing in the Roman church at the time when such an
nion has any historical interest.

. In another part of the Latin world, North Africa, a different
e of the tradition is found. **Tertullian** (born at Carthage about
), in his treatise on *Modesty*, ch. xx., says: "I wish, however, out

of redundancy to superadd the testimony of a companion of t apostles. . . . For there exists an Epistle to the Hebrews of Ba nabas. . . ." Then, after citing Heb. vi. 4–8, he adds: "He wl learned this from apostles, and taught with apostles, never kne of any second repentance promised by the apostles to the adulter and the fornicator." The manner of this reference to Barnabas ind cates that Tertullian is not expressing here a mere opinion of h own, but one which had at least a considerable diffusion, if it was n universal, in the regions where he lived.

Another distinguished writer of the same country, **Cyprian**, Bish of Carthage (died 258), states expressly that, as in the Apocalyp epistles were addressed to seven churches, in like manner Paul wro to seven churches—which he enumerates, omitting the Hebrews.

Africa and Rome were very closely connected, and it is possi that the tradition in the one should be regarded as supplementary that in the other; and that Africa furnishes the positive side, whe Rome only presents the negative in its denial of the Pauline authe ship. There is extant a so-called Epistle of Barnabas. This, ho ever, is admittedly spurious. It has many points of resemblance the Epistle to the Hebrews, though it uniformly moves on a mu lower level. And it has been ingeniously suggested that the tradit of the authorship of an Epistle by Barnabas has become confus and he has been credited with the meaner performance, while that the Hebrews, of which he is the true author, has been attributed the greater name of Paul. If this be the case, Barnabas has be hardly treated at the hands of history. But we should only have instance of what we observe every day, the servile tendency—by means confined to the popular mind—to attribute any remarka production or deed to some great and familiar name.

3. In Alexandria we meet with a state of the tradition altoge different. The Epistle was early known in the East, for **Justin Mar** (before middle of 2d century) seems to have been acquainted with as he states that Christ is called "Apostle"—a name given H nowhere but in the Hebrews. It seems certain that a very anci tradition existed at Alexandria, to the effect that the Epistle Pauline. How far back this tradition goes cannot be known, bu stretches into a time anterior to that of any of the great teac

ose names have come down to us. For what we observe in exandria is the very interesting spectacle of a struggle between the ierited tradition and theological scholarship, in which the latter is en putting forth a variety of efforts to reconcile the results of its n observation of the Epistle with the external tradition. We serve three instances of this, which form a kind of progression.

Eusebius (*Hist.* vi. 14) quotes a passage from Clement of Alexan- a, in which the latter refers, under the name of "the blessed esbyter," to his predecessor **Pantænus** (middle of 2d century), and ys of him that he explained the absence of the name of the Apostle ul from the Epistle in this way:—Seeing the Lord, who was the ostle of the Almighty, was sent to the Hebrews, Paul did not sub- ibe himself an Apostle of the Hebrews, both out of reverence for e Lord, and because he wrote of his abundance to the Hebrews, ing the Apostle of the Gentiles.

**Clement** himself (end of 2d century) frequently cites the Epistle as Paul's. In the same chapter of his *History*, Eusebius states in gard to him, that he asserted that the Epistle was written by Paul the Hebrews in the Hebrew tongue, and was translated by Luke, d published among the Greeks. And in this way was explained e fact that its style resembled that of the Acts. Clement explains e absence of the Apostle's name in a different way from Pantænus. e did not give his name because the Hebrews had imbibed a preju- e against him, lest he should deter them from perusing his letter.

Finally, we have **Origen** (first half of 3d century). Origen ascribes rteen Epistles to St. Paul, including among them that to the ebrews. He usually cites the Epistle as "Paul," or "the Apostle." other occasions he refers to it in a manner which indicates that was well aware that its Pauline authorship was disputed. Euse- us (*Hist.* vi. 25) gives a lengthened extract from Origen, in which says of the Epistle, that the style has not that uncouth character speech which the Apostle confesses to belong to him (2 Cor. xi. 6); e Epistle is better Greek, as every one will acknowledge who is cap- le of judging of diversities of style. That the thoughts of the Epistle e admirable, and not second to those of the acknowledged apostolic itings, every one will admit who gives himself to attentive reading the Apostle. Origen then adds his view, which is, that the thoughts

are those of the Apostle, but the phraseology and composition are some one else, who wrote down and, as it were, annotated upon wh belonged to the Apostle. Not without reason have the ancient m handed down the Epistle as Paul's, but who wrote the Epistle known only to God. In reference to this point, different traditio had come down, some saying that Clement of Rome was the writ of the Epistle, and some that it was Luke, the writer of the Gosp and the Acts. By the question, Who *wrote* the Epistle? Orig means, Who composed it? in the sense he had just explained, a neither, Who was the mere amanuensis? nor yet, Who was the ind pendent author? The question was, Who was that secondary auth who wrote down and redacted the apostolic thoughts? It is n probable that, by the "ancient men," Origen means merely his pred cessors Pantænus and Clement; he refers to a more primitive traditio

These testimonies form a curious and interesting chain. Th presuppose a firm objective tradition, with which, however, t scholarly mind, in view of the peculiarities of the Epistle itself, h its difficulties. To Pantænus the Epistle is Pauline, and he thin it necessary only to account for the absence of the Apostle's nam contrary to his usual habit. Clement's criticism cuts deeper. T Epistle is St. Paul's, but it is a translation, executed by Luke, a hence the similarity of its style to the Acts. This similarity to t style of Luke has struck many scholars, and is in some respects undoubted that several writers, *e.g.* Delitzsch, have been induced it to regard Luke as the real author of the Epistle. It does not see to have suggested itself to Origen that the Epistle was a translatio But, to his feeling, the style was decidedly not that of St. Paul. the Epistle was in a real sense Pauline; its thoughts were those the Apostle, but the actual execution was by some one else, thou by whom was a mystery. When Origen says that the thoughts a those of the Apostle, he does not mean merely that some compani of St. Paul had deeply imbibed his ideas, and given them out in work perfectly reflecting them. He means, no doubt, more, viz. th St. Paul had in some way a direct hand in the Epistle. It would interesting to know whether Origen had ever set himself to imagi the steps by which, according to his theory, the Epistle had actua been produced.

Later testimony is of no great interest, and of little meaning. By age of Jerome and Augustine, Latin writers are frequently found erring to the Epistle as Pauline, though by no means uniformly. ese two great writers cite it as St. Paul's, though often referring to fact that the Pauline authorship was questioned; and their example s, without doubt, very influential in producing the general consent he Pauline authorship that prevailed after their time. On occa- ns when Jerome indicates his consciousness of the existence of ubts as to the authorship, he expresses himself in this way: *The istle which, under the name of Paul, is written to the Hebrews; He who writes to the Hebrews;* or, *Whoever he may be who wrote Epistle to the Hebrews;* or, *The Apostle Paul, or whoever else ote the Epistle to the Hebrews.* Augustine, in a passage of his *ristian Doctrine*, enumerates fourteen Pauline Epistles, including brews, without remark. Elsewhere he cites the Epistle anony- usly as, *The Epistle written to the Hebrews*, or, *The Epistle to the brews;* and in one passage he admits that he is greatly moved by "authority of the Oriental churches." The progress of opinion is iously marked by the phraseology adopted by some of the Councils lealing with the canon. The Council held at Hippo, in Numidia 3), enumerates thus: *Of the Apostle Paul, thirteen Epistles; of same, one to the Hebrews.* So the Council at Carthage (397), at ich Augustine was present. Twenty years later, another Council Carthage reckons fourteen Epistles of St. Paul without any dis- tion.

Nothing new has emerged since this date beyond the conjecture of ther that the author might be Apollos, a view which has secured adherence of many distinguished writers on the Epistle.

Modern investigators, while of course not losing sight of the hope being able to condescend at last on some name as the author of the istle, have set before them the task of settling first of all this alter- ive, Is the Epistle by the Apostle Paul or not? And it must be nowledged that the prevailing verdict has been unfavourable to Pauline authorship. Not that there is unanimity, but the current pinion is against the authorship of the Apostle.

n the keen scrutiny to which the Epistle has been subjected, not the language and style, but also the thoughts and teaching of

the Epistle, have been brought under searching review, and th question, narrower than the last and in advance of it, and even mo interesting, has arisen, Is the Epistle in its type of doctrine distin tively Pauline or not? Such a question does not appear to ha occurred to antiquity, the Pauline character of the Epistle bei everywhere accepted. And it is so still with more or less importa reservations by very many writers. Under the general unity of fai common to all New Testament writers, there may exist individu variety. One writer may dispose the common materials in such way that the fabric which he rears produces a different impressi on the eye from that produced by the fabric raised by another. can hardly be denied that there are such differences, though t present tendency to seek for them may have been carried to exce just as a former age went to an extreme in its tendency to oblitera all distinctions. It is the opinion of many writers who have bestow much attention on the Epistle, that, though the first impression whi it produces is, that it strongly resembles the Pauline Epistles, wh more fundamentally examined its deeper and real affinities are fou to be with the primitive apostolic teaching as exhibited in the ea speeches in the Acts and in the Epistles of Peter and James.

Besides arguments like that from ch. ii. 3 (see notes), and fr the absence of the author's name, which are against the Pauli composition, the discussion moves on two main lines, mention which is all that can be made here.

1. **The Language.**—The judgment of Origen (and probably Clem also), whose language was Greek, that the style is not that of Pauline Epistles, is acquiesced in by scholars generally. Erasm the greatest authority of the Reformation age, contended that divergence was not only in words or figures, but extended to ev characteristic. The stately march of the oratory; the rhythmi balance of the sentence; the straight course pursued by the ex sition, which never allows itself to be diverted into side paths by starting of incidental points—to which the nimble and impuls Pauline dialectic so often gives chase; the skilful planning and cl laying out of the whole, illustrated in the habit of throwing in a cat word in preparation for a new development (see on iii. 1, xi. 1), showing that the Author saw along the whole line and the end be

spoke his first word—all this is as unlike the Pauline manner as
ssible. Of course this general impression which the style pro-
ces has been subjected to the usual critical solvents. Heaps of
rds and phrases have been collected together common to the Epistle
h the Pauline writings. Such collections have little relevancy.
aps as great or greater and equally suggestive can be gathered
the other side. In regard to the resemblances, it has to be remem-
ed that a common religious language was already prepared for
New Testament writers in the Greek translation of the Old Testa-
nt; that this Epistle covers the same ground with that of the
uline Epistles, much more exactly than any other New Testament
ting does; and that a certain dependence of the Author on Pauline
ughts is not disputed. The mass of identical expressions is at first
ht imposing, but every expression must be examined by itself, and
en this is done it is very often found that under identical phrase-
gy there lies a different sense. For example, the words "bondage"
15), "calling" (iii. 1), "weak" (vii. 18), "transgression" (ix. 15),
fe" (x. 38), and various other distinctive Pauline phrases, occur in
s Epistle to express shades of meaning quite different from their
hnical sense in the writings of the Apostle Paul. The same must
said of the Old Testament quotations; they are often used in a
ferent manner, *e.g.* Ps. viii.

2. **The Doctrine.**—That the Author was at home in Pauline circles
vident from his relations to Timothy. A certain influence, there-
e, of Pauline conceptions upon his system is to be anticipated.
w pervasive this influence is must be matter for investigation, not
assumption. The greatest resemblance with the Pauline Epistles
pears in the region of Christology, that is, between the Christology
this Epistle and the *later* Pauline writings, the Epistles to the
lossians and Philippians. Yet even here the central place to
ich the sonship of Christ has been elevated in the Epistle, seems
advance on other Epistles, and suggests reflective systematizing.
e Epistle agrees with the Pauline writings in the profound signifi-
ıce which it attributes to the death of the Son, yet how differently,
der the great ruling conception of His Priesthood, are the details
arding the Son's offering worked out. It is this idea of the
esthood of the Son that gives its character to our Epistle, and

exerts a modifying influence upon almost every detail of the Christian system, so that it is not too much to say that under its influence almost every truth is set in the Epistle in other lights and placed in different relations from those in which it appears in the Pauline Epistles. A number of illustrations of this will be found in the following notes, and the subject cannot be pursued further here.—In the last volume of the *Speaker's Commentary* will be found a list of divergences of the Epistle from Pauline doctrine gathered from Riehm's *Doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews* by Dr. Kay, who has accompanied the list with a running refutation.

The happy suggestion of Luther, that Apollos might be the Author of the Epistle, has commended itself to many since his time. The Author was certainly such a man as Apollos—a certain Jew . . . a Alexandrian by race, a learned man . . . mighty in the Scriptures . . . instructed in the way of the Lord . . . fervent in spirit . . . and one that powerfully confuted the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ (Acts xviii. 24–28). More felicitous words could not be found to describe a writer whose thinking moves on the lines of the primitive Jewish Christianity, who is possessed of Alexandrian culture and who wields with such skill and fervour the weapon of the Alexandrian exegesis. It is strange, however, if Apollos be the Author, that it never occurred to antiquity to connect his name with the Epistle. Others who defer more to the traditions of antiquity consider that the claims of Barnabas are not lightly to be set aside. The Levitical descent of Barnabas (Acts iv. 36) might account for the conception of ritual or worship that pervades the Epistle; and his gifts, which secured for him the name of "son of exhortation," are such as distinguish the Author of this Epistle, who has himself called his letter a word of exhortation (xiii. 22). The early history of Barnabas, however, hardly agrees with what is implied in ii. 3.[1]

[1] A few extended Notes have been added on points that could not well be treated in the ordinary notes. These Notes would naturally have found a place in the Introduction; it has been thought better, however, to insert them in suitable places in the exposition, so as not to swell the Introduction to an undue size.

# THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

## INTRODUCTORY.

HE Epistle is not a controversial treatise, but a "word of exhortaon" (xiii. 22). It is written to Jewish Christians in danger, under anifold temptations, of falling away from the faith of Christ, and its ıole substance consists in the exhortation, repeated in many forms d sustained by many considerations, to hold fast the beginning of eir confidence firm unto the end (iii. 6, 14, x. 23, etc.).

The error for which the Hebrews here addressed seemed in danger giving up their Christian faith is little brought into the foreground, eir danger of falling away from the Christian faith is what occupies e writer. This danger he seeks to avert by a positive statement of ıat the Christian faith is, as the religion of finality. This positive ıtement, however, regarding the faith of Christ as absolutely the ıe religion, takes the form of a contrast between the religion of ırist and the Old Testament economy. This was natural in several ıys. For first, the Apostle was writing to Jewish believers. Then was a Jew himself, and all his general religious conceptions had en learned from the Old Testament; and the Christian truths which is desirous of expressing, come forth from his mind cast in the ould of the principles and general ideas of the Old Testament igion. It is probable, too, that the Hebrews to whom he wrote re in danger of relapsing into the ancient religion, at all events ir insecurity in the Christian faith arose from their not having a ar understanding of the relation of the two economies to one other, particularly in the point of priesthood and atonement. The o economies *are* related, and the method of contrast is better suited ın any other to bring out the differences as well as the resemblances tween them. The relation between the two economies is of a uble kind. On the one hand, the Old Testament economy drew, to speak, a great many sketches and outlines which it could not in, and threw out a number of ideas which it could not realize, d had many institutions which failed to fulfil their own manifest n. In opposition to all this, Christianity presented a finished ture, it realized truly its religious ideas, and its institutions fulfilled ir aim. This was the difference: the Law made nothing perfect

(vii. 19). But there was resemblance. The perfect Christian picture was the Old Testament outline itself filled in; the ideas which the faith of Christ realized and the aim which its institutions fulfilled, were the very ideas and aim of the Old Testament economy itself—the Law had a shadow of the good things that were to come (x. 1). Judaism is a shadowy likeness and prophecy of Christianity. Christianity is Judaism transfigured and crowned.

The Epistle conceives religion, or the relation of God and His People, under the idea of a covenant. A covenant is a realized *state* of relation between God and men, in which He is their God and they are His People (viii. 10)—in other words, in which He remembers their sins no more (viii. 12, x. 17), and they are "sanctified" (through having had their consciences purified from sins) to be a worshipping People, serving the living God (ix. 14, x. 10, 14, 19). And the object of the Epistle is to show that in Christianity this covenant state has come into existence and exists truly and for ever. This covenant state is realized in fact and has actual embodiment in this, that the representative high priest of the people, Jesus the Son of God, sits at the right hand of God, before His face, for ever (i. 3, iv. 14, vi. 20, vii. 26, viii. 1, ix. 12, 24, x. 12, 21). The setting forth the fact of the actual realization of this covenant state is the main purpose of the Epistle, but the fact is presented under various aspects, and the steps that led to its being realized are traced. And the whole is worked out through a series of contrasts with the first covenant. Interspersed are many practical appeals and warnings founded mainly on Old Testament parallels, the principles of these parallels being *à fortiori* valid in the new covenant.

The Epistle consists of three great sections, with their practical applications, and a conclusion (chap. i.–ii., chap. iii.–iv. 13, chap. iv. 14–xii. 29, and chap. xiii.). Each of these sections exhibits a contrast between the Christian religion and the first covenant. The first contrasts Jesus and the Angels; the second, Jesus and Moses; and the third, Jesus and the high priest. The peculiarity of these contrasts is that they move inward, each successive contrast being narrower than the one preceding. The first, that between Christ and the Angels (chap. i.–ii.) is the widest possible; it is a contrast of the two worlds, of God's two great and universal administrations, that of "this world" and that of the "world to come;" though chiefly in the persons of those who, under God, are their respective heads, the Angels in the one case and the Son in the other. The two other contrasts, which along with this one make up, so to speak, the doctrinal skeleton of the Epistle, around which the warmer flesh and blood of exhortation and personal appeal and motive is disposed, are narrower. That between Moses and Christ, the one faithful as a servant in all God's house, the other faithful as a son over the house, though still wide, is more internal. And the third, that between the high priest in the first covenant and Jesus, the high priest after the order of Melchizedek, though the most essential, is the narrowest and most internal of all.

## FIRST SECTION.—CHAPTERS I.–II.

### JESUS AND THE ANGELS.

**God has given to us His final revelation through His Son, and has made im head over the world in its final condition—the world to come. In is exalted place the Son, the Leader of Salvation, has become as much gher than the Angels, revealers of the first covenant and heads of the d Testament world, as His name and relation of Son is more excellent an their name of messengers and place of servants.**

**Outline of chap. i.–ii.**—1. God having spoken unto the fathers the prophets, has at the end of these days spoken unto us in His on and made Him heir of all things—an honour meet, as by Him e also made the worlds. Being the brightness of God's glory, nen He had made purification of sins He sat down on the right nd of God—a place becoming Him who is the image of God's ture. In the act of taking this place He has become as much tter than the Angels as His name of Son is more excellent than eirs (vers. 1–4).

2. Passages from the Old Testament illustrating the Son's superiority name and present redemptive dignity to the angels (vers. 5–14).

3. Exhortation to give the more earnest heed to the revelation made rough the Son; for if the Law revealed and administered by Angels as swift to punish all transgression of it, how shall we escape if we glect the great salvation made known by the Son of God, the Lord the new and final dispensation, the world to come (chap. ii. 1–4)?

4. This lofty place (as already said, i. 4) is indeed His. For the orld to come, the world of salvation and final state of things, has t been put in subjection to Angels (as this world was). On the con- ary, the Word of God in prophecy runs: What is man . . .? Thou st put all things in subjection under his feet.—This destined subjec- on of all things we see not yet realized in man as a whole. But it is en realized in Jesus, the Son of God, who became man, and went rough the history set before man. And this history He went rough that He might enable man to reach the high glory destined r him, or salvation—that he might taste death for every man (ii. 5–9).

5. It was becoming God, on account of whom and through whom e all things, bringing many men to their appointed glory as sons, make His Son perfect as the Leader of their salvation, by laying on

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in

Him and bringing Him through a history in all points resembling theirs, including death (ii. 10–18).[1]

Vers. 1–4. Jesus, the Son of God, is the revealer of God's final message to men, and is set as head over the world to come. Having made purification of sins, He has sat down at God's right hand. This high place is becoming His relation of Son and meet for Him who is the image of God's nature, though reached through making purification of sins. As Head over the final order of things, the world to come, He is become as much higher than the Angels, heads of the Old Testament world, as His name of Son is more excellent than theirs of Angels or Messengers.

Vers. 1, 2. *God, who at sundry times . . . by his Son.* There is a certain contrast between God's revelation in Old Testament times and that given through the Son. Contrast, however, is not the main thing; the revelation through the Son is the natural sequel and perfection of that wide and varied revelation begun of old and carried on through many ages. The rhetorical balance of the sentence may be exhibited thus :—

| | |
|---|---|
| God, having spoken | spake |
| of old, in sundry portions and in divers manners, | at the end of these days, |
| unto the fathers, | unto us, |
| in the prophets, | in His Son, whom He made, etc. |

In one respect between the Old Testament revelation and the New there is resemblance, in other points there is difference. They are alike in this, that both were spoken by God; they differ as to their time, their manner, the persons to whom, and the agents through whom they were spoken. And perhaps in each of these points there is something that implies the superiority of the New over the Old, though they are both parts of one system. The first difference is that of *time* and *manner:* **of old, in sundry portions and in divers manners,** opposed to: **at the end of these days.**—In the minds of men then living the duration of the world and the life of the church was divided into two great epochs, "this age" and "the age to come." The latter was identified in a general way with the times of the Messiah. Within the former, viz. "this age," a minor distinction could be drawn between "of old," the past, and "these days," the present. In the former God spake in the prophets; in the other, even at the end of the other, in His Son. The expression "at the end of these days" implies that these days were nearly ended; Christ's appearance marked the close of the age to which they belonged. Not that it closed at once when He appeared, nor had it closed when

[1] On these two chapters, see a series of suggestive papers by Prof. W. R. Smith, in the *Expositor*, 1881–82. The following notes are indebted to these papers in various particulars.

time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last

is author wrote; it would close definitively when Christ should me again the second time without sin unto salvation (ix. 28). But the minds of all saints then living His second coming was immi-nt, and therefore His first manifestation is considered to mark the ose of these days.

The phrase, "in sundry portions and in divers manners," *i.e.* in rious parts and in many forms, does not indicate any inferiority of e Old Testament revelation to the New, arising from its fragmentari-ss and the colour it received from circumstances and the many ophetic minds through whom it came. The expression rather nalizes the variety and fulness of the Old Testament Word of God. another point of view, indeed, these words might indicate defect: e Old Testament revelation being given in sundry portions was not al and complete; and being given under diverse forms, it was not nple and homogeneous. And to this there might be a superiority pressed in "at the end of these days"—the old partial way having ven place to fulness and unity, and the old many-coloured manner ving disappeared before the simplicity of perfect truth. This idea, wever, was hardly in the writer's mind. The phrase, "in divers nners," refers not strictly to the ways in which God revealed truth the prophets, but rather to the ways in which He spake through em to men. The distinction, however, was probably not in the thor's view, and as the prophets usually not only reproduced the eaning of what they received, but detailed the way in which it came them, the distinction hardly exists.

The words "to the fathers" and "to us" mark another point of ference. The fathers are the church and saints of Israel's past, the writer is an Hebrew speaking to Hebrews; and "to us" means men posterior to the advent of Christ. God's speaking to the hers extended over many ages, just as the succession of prophets l, in whom He spake; for though His revelation of the covenant, e chief word that He spake of old, was made through Moses, the eatest of the prophets (Deut. xxxiv. 10; Acts vii. 37; Hos. xii. 13), Israel of the Exodus, He raised up prophets in every age to expound d enforce it. But His speaking to us was bounded by the brief m of the Son's life upon earth (ii. 3). The words "to us" might licate the finality of the revelation given in the Son, for "we" are y on whom the ends of the world are come (1 Cor. x. 11), and d's design was that "they" without "us" should not be made fect (xi. 40).

The chief point of difference lies in the words "in the prophets" d "in His Son, whom He made heir," etc. The "prophets" are who served God in the work of revelation, all who spake from God Pet. i. 21). Though knowing the secret of the Lord (Amos iii. 7), y stood related to Him only as servants and as sustaining an ce; the Son who has spoken to us stands to God in the closest ation of nature. The word "his" is not expressed—it is one that

days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed

is a Son in whom God has spoken to us. The Son is the greatest and last messenger of God to men. He makes the final revelation. Coming from heaven, He reveals and opens the "heavenly" world. Compare the parable of the Husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33). God's "speaking" in the Son does not refer to the mere fact that He employed Him as an organ of revelation, but includes the revelation made, "the things that have been heard" (ii. 1). The Son, though contrasted with the prophets, is in a sense on a line with them: He closes the line of those through whom God speaks. On "speak" for reveal, see Note on Word of God, after chap. iv. 13.

Ver. 2. In this section, chap. i.–ii., the contrast is between the whole mediatorial position of the Son, embracing both revealing and headship on the one hand, and that of the Angels on the other. This contrast embraces two points or poles—one the nature of the Son, His dignity in Himself; and the other corresponding to it, His exalted redemptive position on high. Vers. 1–3 describe the Son's whole mediatorial position, and ver. 4 sets it forth in contrast to that of the Angels.—*Whom he appointed heir.* The heirship to which God appointed His Son is certainly His actual lordship over all things. To this He has already attained virtually in sitting down at God's right hand (ii. 9, i. 8, 9), though He waits till it be in fact realized (x. 12, 13). "Appointed" or *set* describes the actual elevation of the Son to this place on His ascension, not any eternal purpose of God thus to elevate Him. Beyond the assumption of the pre-existence of the Son the Epistle seems nowhere to desert the region of history. "Appointed heir," as an act of God, corresponds to "sat down" as an act of the Son Himself. The word *heir*, one destined to possess, may suggest that He has not yet entered into full possession (x. 13).—*By whom also . . .*; or, **through whom he also made.** God spake unto us in His Son the same Son He set heir of all things, and this heirship was meet for Him both because He was the Son, and because He had been in the hand of God the Maker of the worlds. To "Son" and "Maker" the fitting correspondent is "heir."—This making of the worlds is to be taken literally, as the Old Testament illustration from Ps. cii. in ver. 10 shows, and does not mean that, having the Son in His thoughts or moved by purposes in connection with Him as yet to appear in history, God made the worlds. The Son was God's agent in creation (John i. 3; Col. i. 16). The Son is set forth here in three states, as pre-existing, as in the flesh, and as exalted. It was the same Son through whom God made the worlds, in whom He spake to us, and whom He set heir of all things. The verse gives a view of the Christian Mediator in His entire history, which was necessary in order to a full contrast with the mediators of the first covenant. The word represent the entire line of His history as He is *related to God*, and the end of the line, God's making Him heir of all things, was becoming the beginning of it, His being His Son and agent in making the worlds, and could not have been possible for any but the Son.

heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ; who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image

Ver. 3 is exactly parallel in meaning to ver. 2, with one difference. er. 2 describes the Son in relation to God, and His history as some- ing which God did unto Him; ver. 3 describes the Son in His own ture, and His history as something done by Himself under the pulse and in the power of His nature. The end of the history is e same in both cases, for "made heir" corresponds to "sat down;" d the beginning is the same, for "brightness of His glory" is but expansion of "Son;" but the connection between the beginning d the end differs; the passage from "Son" to "heir" is through nade the worlds," while the passage from "brightness of His glory" "sat down at His right hand" is through "having made purification sins." Heirship of all things is the dignity befitting sonship, and ly possible to a son; but it is more befitting, inasmuch as the Son is the maker of all things: sitting at the right hand of God is coming one who is the brightness of His glory, and only possible one of this divine nature; but it was reached through making rification of sins. The one place which the Son now occupies was ached along two lines—one, the line of His essential being; the ner, that of His moral history.

*Who, being the brightness of his glory;* lit. effulgence of his glory. Being" describes what the Son was in His own nature, and the lowing words merely expand "Son." The reference is to the pre- isting state of the Son, what He was in Himself, which certainly plains how He sat down at the right hand of God. There scarcely ems material for answering the question, Was the Son the brightness God's glory also in the days of His flesh?[1] "Glory" is not any ternal halo that surrounds the divine nature; it is the divine nature elf in its majesty and as manifested to the world. The expression *ulgence* suggests perhaps three ideas: 1. That the nature of the n is derived from God; 2. That it has distinct subsistence of its n; and, 3. That it resembles the nature of God. The word effulg- ce seems to mean not rays of light streaming from a body in their nnection with that body or as part of it, still less the reflection of ese rays caused by their falling upon another body, but rather rays light coming out from the original body and forming a similar ht-body themselves. How far the idea of *light* is to be pressed ay be doubtful, for Philo speaks of the spirit of man as "the effulg- ce of the blessed and thrice-blessed Nature." A close parallel to e Apostle's language occurs in the Wisdom of Solomon (chap. . 26), which says of Wisdom: "She is the effulgence of the ever- ting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image His goodness."[2]

[1] See Note at end of chap. ii.

[2] Though an Alexandrian production, the Wisdom of Solomon reflects Palestinian as; and the same may be said of this Epistle: it expresses ideas that belong to lf, even where it may seem to use Alexandrian phraseology.

of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on

*Express image of his person;* or, **very image of his substance** (Tyndale). The term "very image" (Gr. *charaktèr*) means properly what stands engraven on any object, as a seal; hence distinct, sharply defined features, by which any thing or person may be distinguished, whether they be features of mind or body. The additional idea that these features have been impressed by something else of which they are the reproduction, may also lie in the word, though it seems less prominent here. It means distinct, recognisable features. The Son is the very image of God, in Him may be perceived distinctly the nature of God (John xiv. 9).—"Substance" (Gr. *hypostasis*) does not mean, of course, mere substance without attributes, it is the being or nature. The term "person" is suitable enough, provided it be not used in the technical sense, which it has when applied to any of the three "persons" of the Godhead. The Son is the effulgence of God's glory, and the very likeness of the divine nature.

*And upholding . . . power.* This clause is closely connected with the last; and what it says of the Son's relation to the world is to be taken along with what was said of His relation to God. The "word of His power" is the word that expresses and conveys His power. He "upholds all things," *i.e.* sustains the organic body of the universe in all its applications, as one who made the world (ver. 2). In Col. i. 17 the idea is slightly different; there the Son is the element in which the universe holds together, here He consciously sustains it.

*By himself purged our sins.* Rather: **when he had** (having) **made purification of sins.** The MSS. omit "by Himself" and "our." Like the preceding, this clause is not merely historical; it explains how the Son came to "sit down" on high. The former clause expressed how from His nature it was possible and suitable that He should occupy so lofty a place; this describes the moral history which He had that led to the dignity (ii. 9; Phil. ii. 7, etc.). To make purification of sins is to remove them by purification, to purify them away. The language is suggested by the Old Testament practice of sprinkling blood upon whatever was defiled by the sinful contact or manipulation of men. Things so sprinkled with sacrificial blood had the uncleanness that adhered to them purified away (ix. 21, etc.). This is the Old Testament ceremonial in the sphere of the copies of things to which corresponds the efficacy of Christ's blood in the sphere of the true things (ix. 23). The Author, however, in his brief summary of the great steps through which the Son rose to the right hand of God, merely mentions this purification, postponing the full illustration of it till further on (ix. 11–14; comp. x. 12). On "purify," see Note to chap. x.

*Sat down . . . on high.* This phrase, taken from Ps. cx. 1, is the solemn formula made use of in the Epistle to describe the present dignity of the Son, to which He rose through His work in the flesh (viii. 1, x. 12, xii. 2). The words "on the right hand of the Majesty"

the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a

ly that He occupies the place of honour (1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. 9) in the universe (i. 4, ii. 9). The "sitting down," besides lying that His attaining the honour was an event of history, n expresses the honour itself rather than any condition of se, for He actively performs the duties of a high priest (vii. 25, comp. x. 13). There is no intimation that His glory (ii. 9, v. 5) is same as that of the Majesty at whose right hand He sat down; is He regarded as sitting on the throne of God (comp. on the *t hand of the throne* of God, viii. 1, xii. 2), nor as sharing the ary rule of God as God. At the same time the "right hand" is ace of influence (vii. 25) and also of rule. He is King (i. 8, vii. 2), over the house of God (iii. 6). He is appointed heir of all things ), and set over the world to come (ii. 9). His rule being of all gs, is co-extensive with the divine rule, but it is to different effects. is spoken of here solely in His redemptive position. Neither is e any intimation here that His glory is the same glory as belonged Him before coming into the world (John xvii. 5). We have no ement in the Epistle regarding Christ in His state before He came e flesh beyond the name of Son and the words in i. 3; and no ition is given anywhere of the precise relation of His present e of exaltation to His former pre-existing state, further than that present state is regarded as in harmony with the other, and only ible to a being to whom the other belonged.—The great statement ers. 1–3 may be finally put: God (having spoken . . . ), *b* spake at end of these days unto us in His Son, *c* whom He made heir of all gs, *a* through whom He also made the worlds; who, *a* being the htness of His glory . . . , *b* when He had made purification of , *c* sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

er. 4. *Being made* . . . ; rather: **having become**, *i.e.* in the act of ng down at the right hand of Majesty.—*Hath by inheritance ined*, or, **hath inherited.** This verse states explicitly the contrast veen the present redemptive place of the Son (which embraces and ly possible through His being the Son, but was reached through life in the flesh, ii. 9) as sketched in vers. 1–3, and the place of the els. The Son became "better" than the Angels. This redemp- dignity to which the Son attained was in harmony with His name on (comp. iii. 6, v. 5), and is as much higher than the place of els as the name of Son, which belongs to Him, is more excellent the name of "Angels" or messengers by which they are called np. Phil. ii. 7, etc.; Eph. i. 20, etc.). This contrast of the Son the Angels is for the purpose of showing His superiority gener- to all beings, even the highest, but especially to the Angels as alers of the Old Testament covenant and heads of the Old Testa- t world (ii. 2). The contrast is properly one of the two worlds in persons of their heads. The Son is head of the new world, the d to come, the final form of things, which is salvation (ii. 3), and

which is therefore as much higher than the former or old world as the Son is higher than the Angels.—On the use of "better" in the Epistle to describe the things belonging to the new covenant, comp. vii. 19, 22, viii. 6, ix. 23, x. 34, xi. 40, xii. 24. On "more excellent," comp. viii. 6. And for other examples of the comparison "so much . . . as," see vii. 20–22, viii. 6.

Vers. 5–14. **Illustrations from Old Testament Scripture of the statements regarding the Mediator of the new covenant made in vers. 1–4.**

The purpose of the Author in advancing these passages should be understood. They are not brought forward as *proofs* of the things said of the Son in vers. 1–3, though they illustrate them. The only thing the Author is interested in *proving* is the point in ver. 4, that Christ, these things being true of Him, is "better" than the Angels. The Author is not setting before his readers new truths regarding Christ. As believers of long standing (ii. 3, x. 32, xiii. 7) they are familiar with the history of the Son, and he no more needs to open and allege to them that Jesus is the Christ (Acts xvii. 3). His readers agree with him that many Old Testament passages, particularly those which he cites, refer to the Messiah; also, that the historical personage, Jesus, was the Messiah. And finally, they are at one with him regarding the events of this man's history, such as His death and ascension to God's right hand. The persons addressed are not young converts needing to be instructed, but old disciples with a worthy history of their own behind them (x. 32), to which amidst their many trials there is danger of their proving false (ii. 1, xii. 12); who therefore need exhortation and strengthening. This the Apostle seeks to convey by large and effective contrasts between the Christian faith and that old belief into which they seemed in danger of relapsing; hoping thus to rub off the rust which, through time and adverse circumstances, and the hope deferred of Christ's coming, had gathered on their minds (x. 36, 37), and to remove the sluggishness (vi. 12) and indifference (x. 25) which were settling on their life, and to confirm their hope (vi. 11, 18, 19, iii. 6) and patience (x. 36, xii. 1). Of such contrasts (Introd., chap. ii. 2) there are three: the present one, which is the largest, is that between the Son, in the whole line of His history, embracing the two points that correspond to one another viz. His person and His present redemptive dignity, on the one hand and the Angels on the other.

Again, the Author's object being to exhort and confirm his disciples he naturally in all that he says mainly refers to Christ as He now is and as He may be believed and felt to be by those whom he addresses in their circumstances; although of course that which Christ now is He is in virtue of His being the Son and in virtue of His offering of Himself. Hence it is probable that in the Writer's view all the passages cited refer to Christ in His present condition of exaltation. Most of them manifestly can have no other application, such as Ps. cx., cited in ver. 13; the Old Testament passage, cited in ver. 6, which refers to the second coming; and Ps. xlv. in ver. 8. But the same is probably true of Ps. cii., cited in ver. 10, etc.; comp. ver. 12 with

more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels

i. 8, vii. 16, 23, etc. The only doubtful passage is Ps. ii., cited in
r. 5.

The passages adduced all bear on the statement in ver. 4, for which
ey are Scripture, and refer to the two points, the "more excellent"
me and, of course, relation of "Son," and the "better" dignity
w, corresponding to it, in contrast with the name of "Angels" and
e place in the administration of God which the Angels occupy. In
r. 6 the two things run somewhat into one another.

. Vers. 5, 6. **The more excellent name.** God in addressing the Messiah
s called Him Son, a name by which He has never called any Angel,
d has declared that He will be to Him a Father (ver. 5). Further,
e shall bring in again the "first-born," that is, the Son-heir, into the
nabited world of men, instating Him into His universal inheritance
2), and to this moment God's words in Scripture refer: "And let all
e Angels of God worship Him." Then the true relation of the Son
Angels, at present concealed, shall be made manifest (ver. 6).

2. Vers. 7–14. **The better dignity.** Corresponding to their names of
Son" and "messengers," is the place occupied by the Messiah and
e Angels respectively in relation to the world and its destinies in the
story of redemption. The Angels stand almost on a level with the
aterial elements—in harmony with the material changing dispensation
ich they administer: suffering themselves in their service of God to be
anged into the form of winds and a flame of fire (vers. 7); while the
here of the Son is the free moral one: in reward of His righteous life
earth He has been raised to a throne that is eternal, and wields a
eptre which is the sceptre of righteousness itself, and thus exalted is
dressed as "God" (vers. 8, 9); He is the first and the last, who, as
e created the world at the beginning, shall change it and fold it up
a garment at the end, Himself eternal and unchanging (vers. 10–12).
ie words, "Sit at my right hand till I make Thine enemies the
otstool of Thy feet," show that the aim and the end of all God's
iding of the redemptive history is the universal lordship of the
n; and how far such words are from ever having been said of any
gel appears from this, that the Angels are *all* merely servants in this
demptive sphere, ministering spirits in behalf of them who shall
nerit salvation (vers. 13, 14).

Ver. 5. *For unto which of the angels . . . my Son?* God in Scrip-
e calls the Messiah Son; at no time has He given such a name to
y Angel. In some parts of the English Bible the Angels are called
ons of God" (*e.g.* Job i. 6, xxxviii. 7). The Hebrew is "sons of
*ohim*" or "*Elim*" (Ps. xxix. 1, lxxxix. 6). The word *Elohim*
mmonly means God. But it had a more general sense. In this
condary meaning it describes what is superhuman or, as might be
d, "divine." In this sense the Angels receive the name Elohim, or
ns (*i.e.* members of the race) of Elohim. No relation to God is
imated by the name: it describes the Angels as a class in contrast
th man. This sense of the word was well understood in early

said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he

times. The oldest translation of the Scriptures renders the passages in Job the "Angels of God" and "my Angels," and that this is not an interpretation or synonym appears from the fact that the bare word *Elohim* without "sons of" is translated "Angels" in Ps. viii. 6, xcvii. 7.

The first passage cited in ver. 5 is from Ps. ii. 7, and the second from 2 Sam. vii. 14. The second is prior in history to the other, and no doubt gave rise to it. It is part of the words spoken on God's behalf by the prophet Nathan to David when the thought of building an house to the Lord had taken possession of his mind. David's design is not rejected but deferred, and the execution of it entrusted to his seed. But in return the Lord promises to build him an house. More precisely two promises are made to David: *first*, that the family of David shall occupy the throne, which he now occupies, for ever—*Thine house and thy seed shall be established for ever before thee, thy throne shall be established for ever* (ver. 16). The connection between David's house and this throne, which is the throne of God's redemptive kingdom, shall never cease. And *second*, God will stand to David's seed—*i.e.* his seed who occupies the throne—in the relation of a Father—*I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son* (ver. 14). The promise is made in general to the line of Davidic kings although in parts with special reference to Solomon, the first of the line. The essential point in the promise is the relation in which the Lord will stand to the son of David, the theocratic King, that is, the king of God's redemptive kingdom. The second Psalm, of whomsoever spoken whether of David or more probably of one of his descendants, is but the lyrical echo of this prophecy. It applies to special circumstances and a particular person the general promise given by Nathan. Rebellious peoples resist the authority of the Anointed of the Lord the theocratic King. In opposition to them the Lord says regarding him: "*I* have set my King on Zion my holy hill" (ver. 6). The Anointed himself repeats to them the Lord's words to him: "Thou art my son *I* have to-day begotten thee" (ver. 7); and what is the natural sequence of sonship, the promise of universal heirship: "Ask of me and I will make the nations thine inheritance" (ver. 8). All this is but dramatic presentation of the ideas in 2 Sam. vii.—the stability and perpetuity of the Davidic throne, the Sonship of the Davidic king, and his consequent heirship of all nations. The theocratic King was begotten or born son the moment he was set as King; he then entered into a new relation to Jehovah. The Sonship and the Kingship are not identical—the King is also son. The closeness of fellowship between the King and Jehovah, the similarity in interests and character, the fatherly love and protection on the one hand and the filial honour and obedience on the other, the special spiritual endowments of the King for his office,—these constitute the sonship, which, though not identical with the kingship, is essential to the right exercise of it.

shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of

These ideas of the eternity of the Davidic kingdom, of the relation the theocratic King, son of David, to Jehovah, and of his heirship all, were probably first expressed in connection with some member David's house in the times of the early monarchy, and were under- od by those who received them in a way compatible with the con- ion of things then. But such words as "son" and the like were ed to suggest and to bear a higher sense than could at that time realized. They were also intended to do this; for as the kingdom God is one both in Old and New Testament times, the revelation God, of which it is the subject, is also one, and at every stage of it s the end in view. And in point of fact, long ere the time of rist the higher sense was suggested by such words and understood lie in them. What this higher sense might be, only further revela- n could unfold. By the time this Epistle was written, the history Jesus had shown in what sense the theocratic Ruler, King of the lemptive kingdom of God, was Son, and the Author uses the term express that sense, and finds that sense contained in the term ere employed in the Old Testament.

t is probable that the Author used the words "I have to-day gotten Thee" as equivalent in meaning to, "Thou art my Son," aching no special signification to the words *to-day*. In applying l Testament passages to the Son, he appears generally not to have his mind any *time* or circumstances when the passages apply or re applied; he employs them merely for the sake of the relation ich they express, for example, "*I will be* to Him a Father" (i. 5); *ath* inherited" (i. 4); see on ii. 11–13. It is scarcely necessary, refore, to ask what is meant by "to-day."[1]

Ver. 6. *And again when he bringeth;* rather, **And when he again** ngeth (or, shall have brought) **in the first-born . . . he saith.** *ain* does not introduce a new citation, but indicates a second nging-in, the reference being to the Son's second advent. The term

[1] St Paul (Acts xiii. 33) seems to understand the words of the Resurrection of ist (comp. Rom. i. 4). If Ascension be substituted for Resurrection, to which his Epistle it corresponds, the application here might be similar. And this is view of many interpreters. The words would then be used as those of Ps. 4 (chap. v. 6) are, as an address to the ascended Son, recognising His Sonship Owen, declaratively). If this were the meaning, the circumstances of the Old tament event would be exactly reproduced in the spiritual fulfilment. The cratic Ruler was set as King and by endowment with the Spirit of the Lord me His son at one moment, and had made to him the promise of rule to nds of the earth; Christ sat down on the right hand of God, and though He not then become Son, He was declared Son (Rom. i. 4) and entered upon exercise of those powers and capacities which belong to Him as Son, and g appointed heir of all things, expects till His enemies be made the footstool is feet.—The words cannot apply to the Incarnation. The only other possible ence would be to the eternal generation, in which case *to-day* would be the nal *now*. This is unnatural, and justly called by Calvin in opposition to ustine a "subtlety."

7 God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh
8 his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and

*first-born* is a recognised name of the Messiah. Primarily it expresses priority to all creatures (Col. i. 15), and in this sense God Himself receives the name of "first-born," but here probably it means nothing more than Son, with the additional idea that the Son is greatly honoured and heir (Ps. lxxxix. 27). Being heir He shall be brought again into the world of men and installed into His inheritance, and then shall all the Angels worship Him.—The present *saith* is used of words ever present in Scripture.—*And let . . . worship him.* Words somewhat similar are found in Ps. xcvii. 7, "Worship Him all His Angels" (Sept.). Most probably the exact words are taken from Deut. xxxii. 43 in the Greek translation, which here contains some verses not found in the Hebrew. The Song of Moses is there run out so as to present a picture of the consummation of all things, in which the manifestation of Jehovah for salvation and judgment and the universal homage to Him of all beings constitute the main features. The point of view of the Psalm is the same. But this manifestation of Jehovah is no other, as the progress of revelation has shown, than His manifestation in the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Hence what is said of Jehovah is applied to Christ as He has appeared, and shall appear again for judgment and salvation.

Ver. 7. *His angels spirits;* better, **His angels winds.** The quotation is from Ps. civ. 4, according to the Greek translation. Two things are expressed: first, the service of the Angels; and second, their alliance in this service to the material elements; under God's transforming hand they suffer a change into winds and a flame of fire. This idea is not to be pressed so far as to imply that the angelic essence undergoes a transformation into material substance, but only that the Angels are clothed with this material form, and in their service assume this shape to men. Illustrations of the idea from the Rabbinical writers are not wanting. "The Angel said unto Manoah, I know not after what image I am made, for God changes us every hour: why, therefore, dost thou ask after my name? Sometimes He makes us fire, at other times wind; sometimes men, at other times again Angels." "God is named God of hosts because He does with His Angels as He pleases; He makes them sometimes sitting (Judg. vi. 11), sometimes standing (Isa. vi. 2), sometimes to resemble women (Zech. v. 9), sometimes men (Gen. xviii. 2)," etc. "When His Angels are sent forth as messengers they are made winds (Ps. civ. 4), when they minister before the throne of His glory they are flames of fire." Comp. Ex. iii. 2.

Ver. 8. *But unto the Son;* or, of the Son. The passage is from Ps. xlv. 6. This is a Psalm addressed to a theocratic King of David's house, *i.e.* a King of the Kingdom of God, and the remarks made above in regard to Ps. ii. apply to it. Both Psalms are ideally theocratic Psalms; that is, they refer to the King and Kingdom of God

ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

ich existed in Old Testament times, but describe these ideally, not they ever actually attained to be, but according to the true concepns of them. Such conceptions are, that the King is just even as d, the true King, is (Ps. lxxii. 1); that he loves righteousness (Ps. 7), and on this account is elevated to a rule more joyous than that any of his fellows, that is, of any who like him are princes; that rule is righteous (Isa. xi. 4, 5); that his Kingdom is eternal (Ps. ii. 5; Isa. ix. 7); and that in him God is fully manifested, and he God (Isa. vii. 14, ix. 6). Such are Old Testament ideals regarding King and Kingdom of God. The authors of such Psalms as this, ugh actually speaking of the Old Testament Kingdom of God and King, were enabled to rise to true conceptions of them and to ress what they tended to be and would be; and thus their words, ng descriptions of the real meaning and perfect condition of the gdom of God and the true character of its King, things not yet n realized, are in their nature prophetic; and the Author of this istle, overleaping the primary application of such passages to the Testament King and Kingdom of God, regards them as direct phecies of the Messiah and His rule, and fulfilled in the Son, Lord he world to come.

*sceptre* . . . ; rather, the sceptre of righteousness. The expres-, *Thou hast loved* . . . *therefore*, implies that the Psalm is conred to refer to Christ's present rule to which He was exalted when sat down on the right hand of the Majesty, which is the reward His righteous life in a former condition (ii. 9). This reference is able to the original application of the Psalm, which was addressed theocratic King, either on his accession or on some joyful occa- later, when his succession was seen to be confirmed by the felicity success attending his rule.—*Anointed with the oil* . . . *fellows.* kings were anointed when called to the throne, the phrase means, le King. "Gladness" describes the height and joy of the rule to ch this King is called (comp. xii. 2, vii. 2). His "fellows" in the lm are probably other princes; if any special force be attached to expression here, it no doubt means the Angels, as dwellers in the of God (xii. 22), and thus the fellows of the Son.

ers. 10–12. *And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning.* The citation is Ps. cii. 25, etc. The contrast between the Angels and the Son, heir respective places in the sphere of redemption, is extreme.

The former almost belong to the material world, assuming material shape and assimilating themselves to the elements of nature, as they serve God in His redemptive providence. The Son stands apart from the world and above it—being before it, for He laid its foundations; and after it, for He shall fold it up as a garment; and while it waxes old He stands over against it, unchanging.—The term "Lord" (comp. xiii. 8, vii. 3, 16, 24, etc.) implies that the Author regards the language of the Psalm as addressed to the exalted Son, though it embraces His past as well, combining according to the Author's wont the two poles, the Son's pre-existing state and His present dignity which corresponds to it.

The Psalm is applied to the Messiah on the principle stated in notes to ver. 6. It belongs to the time of the Exile, and is a prayer of some afflicted believer to Jehovah. This prayer, being one of faith and resting on sure principles of prophetic revelation, is a prophecy of Jehovah's return to His people and of the manifestation of His glory which shall accompany the rebuilding of Zion. This manifestation of Jehovah's glory in the final redemption of His people is seen by the nations and leads to their conversion to the true God—two things always connected in prophecies referring to the restoration from Exile (Isa. xl. 5, xlv. 14, lx. 1, etc.). Thus the redemptive consummation is reached, embracing all mankind. But this redemptive consummation is no other than the goal desired in creation. With the perfection of the church, creation also attains its perfection (Isa. li. 16, lxv. 17; Rom. viii. 19, etc.). The Lord formed the earth not that it should be waste, but to be inhabited (Isa. xlv. 18), and that the meek should inherit it. Thus God the Redeemer and God the Creator are one; He whose glory is revealed in all at the end is the same whose hand laid the foundations of all at the beginning, and started those movements which issue in an universal unity of creation (Eph. i. 10) and homage unto Himself (Isa. xli. 4, xlv. 22, etc.; Phil. ii. 10). These two aspects of Jehovah, Redeemer and Creator, are brought together in the Psalm. But Jehovah the Redeemer is Jehovah in full manifestation in the Messiah (Isa. vii. 14, ix. 6; Ps. xlv. 7, see v. 6), and thus the manifested Redeemer is also Creator. Several other lines of thought led to the same result. That "word" of God which came forth from Him when He spake and it was done (Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9) and light and all creation arose, was endowed with such attributes in Scripture that it seemed separated from the Speaker, and it became to the minds of Hebrew thinkers a distinct Being, intermediate between Jehovah and the world. That "Wisdom" which was with God (Prov. viii. 30), and before all creation, which was God's active thought clothing itself by its own inherent efficiency in the forms of the organic universe, also became another from Jehovah and His fellow, the artificer of all. These conceptions, lying in the minds of religious men, long before the appearance of Christ, were felt to be verified in Him. Both what He was seen to be and what He said of Himself led men to recognise in Him the "Word" and the "Wisdom" of God—eternal, but now revealed in the flesh, the expression and manifestation

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

God (i. 3), His agent in making the worlds (i. 2), and now raised to versal rule over them (i. 4).

Vers. 13, 14. **Final contrast** between the place of the Son and that Angels in redemptive history. The Son who sits at God's right d till all things be put in subjection under His feet (ii. 9, x. 13) is nself the end and aim of this history; the Angels are *all* but vants, helping forward its movements. God rules all for the Son; sends forth the Angels to do His service—a service which they der Him even in behalf of men, who shall be heirs of salvation. e citation is from Ps. cx. 1, which might be said to be the text of the istle.—"Salvation" has two sides: positively, it is inheritance of world to come, the destined heritage of man (ii. 3, 10, v. 9, vi. 9, 28); negatively, it is deliverance from death, which stands in the r of this heritage (ii. 14, etc., comp. v. 7), and from all evils that y oppress men till the revelation of the Son from heaven (vii. 25, np. ix. 28).

The passages vers. 5–14, being all illustrations of ver. 4, describe Son's present place in redemption, although this place was possible y because He was essentially Son. It is not strictly even His sent position that they describe, it is that position as indicating at He shall be in the world to come when all things are made the tstool of His feet (x. 13). His relation to the world to come cor-ponds in a certain sense to that of men to it; He is set as *heir* of ut it is only when He is brought again into it that He shall enter full possession of it (ver. 6), and men at present only taste its vers (vi. 5). It is this position in relation to the world to come, iciently indicated in Christ's present sitting at God's right hand, is contrasted with the place of Angels. Again, the Angels are of rest not in themselves but only as symbols of the pre-Christian , to which they are the mediators of revelation and over which they heads. And the Christian age or world of redemption is as much ner than the Old Testament age as the Son is better than the gels. See Note on the Son, par. 3.

hap. ii. 1–4. **Admonition, based on what has been said of the Son p. i.), to give the more earnest heed to the things heard from Him.**

nnection.—The word *therefore* reposes on i. 4, "better" than the gels, as this statement is supported by the illustrations (vers. 5–14), is being the essential dignity of the Revealer of the new dispensa-, and this being His place in the final order of things, the world to e, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that have heard (through Him from God). For—

utline.—1. Even the revelation of the first dispensation, though

II. 1 THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the
things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let
2 them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast,
and every transgression and disobedience received a just
3 recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so

spoken and authorized by none higher than Angels, proved itself valid and effectual to punish all neglect of it (ver. 2, comp. x. 28). 2. It is certain that the same or a more terrible fate awaits *us* if we neglect so great salvation (ver. 3)—3. a salvation revealed and authenticated in such a manner: first, being at the first spoken by Him who is now Lord; and second, being confirmed, *i.e.* made sure, to us by those who directly heard Him; and this amidst many signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost, showing the presence and giving the attestation of God (ver. 4).

Ver. 1. *Therefore . . . let them slip;* rather, **To the things which were heard, lest perchance we should drift away from them.** The term *heard* seems to correspond to "spoken," and to be applied to immediate hearing of the Son. The Writer does not reckon himself among those who heard; both he and his readers had the words of Christ at second hand from the Lord's immediate hearers (ver. 3).—The figure at the end of the verse is that of being carried past or away from that which it is of consequence to remain beside and observe, viz. here the things that were heard (comp. xiii. 7). On the idea of "heard," see chaps. iii.–iv. The forces that with a continuous action tend to move men away from the faith of Christ, and were especially strong in the case of the Hebrews, are—the many influences of life; the feeling of isolation in the world, or, the other side of this, sympathy with national sentiment and thought; the hardships and slights undergone at the hands of those without; and the monotonous uniformity of the world, where all things continue as they were and give no signs of the Lord's coming: while the resistance offered to such forces is but feeble, owing to the sluggishness of the mind which permits it to take but a loose hold of truth, and the weakness of faith which makes it but dimly present to itself the hope of our calling.

Ver. 2. *Spoken by angels was;* or, **through angels became.** The word spoken through Angels was the Law, in the giving of which the Angels were mediators. So the Apostle Paul (Gal. iii. 19), and Stephen (Acts vii. 53; comp. Deut. xxxiii. 2; Ps. lxviii. 17); and Josephus (*Antiq.* xv. 5. 3) represents Herod as saying, "The most excellent of our doctrines and the most sacred part of our laws we have learned of God through Angels."—The Law proved *stedfast, i.e.* stable, effective to carry itself into execution, and punish every *transgression, i.e.* positive breach of it, and *disobedience, i.e.* overlooking of it or neglect to fulfil it.

Ver. 3. *How shall we . . . salvation. We* is emphatic: we to whom

great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him;* God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, accord-

d has spoken through His Son; and *escape, i.e.* God's final wrath 26, etc.). To *neglect* is not to fail to attend to when first presented belief, but to lose interest in and decline from, after having first wn it (vi. 4, etc.); but though this is the strict meaning of the rds as addressed to the Hebrews, they may have a wider applica-. "Salvation" was already mentioned in i. 14; the Author umes that the Son has revealed salvation. This salvation is de-bed in vers. 5–9. It is called "so great" inasmuch as it is feeble tal man that is enabled to attain it (ver. 6); and it is subjection of things to him (vers. 7, 8); and imposing means (felt to need some ification, vers. 10–18) have been adopted to achieve it (ver. 9). haps the words, "which at the first," etc., are not meant to describe aspect of its greatness, though the manner of its revelation and hentication might also enter into its greatness. The words, how-r, rather bring out the contrast between the manner of its revela- and that of the Law, and thus support the admonition in s. 1–3. The authentication of the great salvation is the highest could be, the Lord, men, and God all combining to testify t.

*Which at the first began;* or, **which having at the first been spoken ugh the Lord was made stedfast** . . . Christ is "Lord" in His sent place of exaltation, but His speaking of the great salvation part of the whole system of which His lordship is another part, the authority of the one belongs to the other.—*Confirmed* is ade stedfast" (ver. 2), as the Law was to Israel. The word firmed does not mean, added their own testimony to the redemp- *truth* of what they heard and preached. This they no doubt did, to men the testimony of other men founded on their own experi-e is very weighty and convincing; and of course we have it, not only he faith of those around us, but in the unbroken life of the church o our time. The point here, however, is rather the accuracy and tworthiness with which the salvation has been handed on even o us, by ear-witnesses of the Lord, combined perhaps with a certain ority which belonged to them as His personal hearers, and the mpanying signs attesting their preaching.

er. 4. *God bearing them witness;* rather, **bearing witness with** n. Their preaching was the testimony of "those who heard;" l bore testimony along with them. His testimony was the *signs* which He attested the preachers as divine messengers; the *ders* or extraordinary works which He gave them to perform; the *rs miracles* or **powers** of a higher kind with which He endowed n for the moment or permanently; and the *gifts* or **distributions** he Holy Ghost, which He bestowed on them according to His

will.[1] The Holy Ghost, being the Spirit of God, is bestowed according to the will of God, and, though one, He is given in such a way to men that they appear with very dissimilar spiritual endowments (1 Cor. xii. 4, 11); and the signal spiritual gifts attending the apostolic preaching both showed that God was most present with it, and marked it as the opening of the new dispensation (Joel ii. 28) and the in-breaking of the world to come (Heb. vi. 5).—The way in which the Author classes himself here among believers of the second generation, when he says, "confirmed even unto us by them that heard," has been felt by most writers on the Epistle, *e.g.* Luther and Calvin, to be decisive against the Pauline authorship. St. Paul claims to have received the Gospel immediately from God, and refuses to acknowledge having been "taught" it (Gal. i. 1, 12; 1 Cor. xv. 3).

Vers. 5–9. **Jesus is man-Lord, the Son of God made man, and risen through death to man's predicted lordship of the world to come,—a history which He underwent that He might taste death for every one.**

**Connection.** — The connection indicated by *for* (ver. 5) is rather difficult to seize. In i. 2, 3, the Apostle indicated that the present redemptive place of Jesus was the meeting-point of two lines. One was His sonship, which made it meet and possible that He should be heir of all, or Messianic King (i. 2). The other was His moral history, His making purification of sins (i. 3). The first line, His sonship and Messianic kingship, the one of which corresponds to the other, and both of which make Him higher than the Angels (i. 4), is drawn out in chap. i. 5–14. To this attaches itself the exhortation in ii. 1–4 to give the more earnest heed to the Son's revelation, based upon the higher dignity of the Revealer of the new dispensation and the circumstances attending the confirmation of His revelation to us. Now the Apostle pursues the other line, that of the Son's moral history. He so framed his exhortation (ii. 1–4) as to introduce this idea. This he does in the words "great salvation" (ii. 3). This salvation on man's side is his deliverance from death and inheritance of the world to come, or "all things" in their final condition (vers. 6–8, 14). On the other side, this salvation comes through Christ being Head of the world to come, and in this condition High Priest of mankind—an idea which pervades the whole Epistle. To this place He rose *because* He suffered death (ver. 9). And this suffering He underwent that by the grace of God He should taste death for every one (ver. 9), or, that through suffering He might be made perfect to be the High Priest of the people of God (vers. 10–18). These are the ideas in the Author's mind which he gradually develops, attaching the one to the other, in vers. 5–18.—The authority of a dispensation is represented by those who were God's agents in revealing it, who by the fact of being its revealers are its heads. Thus the formal connection by *for* (ver. 5) is with the general admonition in vers. 1–3, through the words "great salvation." This admonition to give heed to the great salvation spoken by the Son (ceasing to adhere to the word spoken by Angels) is now further impressed by adducing a new

[1] The word *own* is to be omitted.

ing to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put in

ripture, which describes the salvation of man, and shows that by its roduction the sway of Angels (the former dispensation) passes ay (Ps. viii.), and by adding that the history of Jesus and His ension have realized this salvation not for Himself alone but for ery one, and consequently that continued adherence to the word of gels is disobedience to God's final will (ver. 2).

Outline.—The former dispensation revealed and administered by gels was swift to punish all disobedience to it, how shall we escape ve neglect so great salvation spoken and realized by the Lord—

1. *For* the new world, the final dispensation, has not been put under gels. Rather, the same Scripture, expressing God's gracious pur-ses with men, which subjects man for a little time to the rule of gels, predicts his emancipation and elevation to the place of vereignty over the new world, and puts all things without exception aving no place for the dominion of Angels) under his feet (vers. 3).

2. This subjection of all things to man we see not yet accomplished r. 8).

3. But we behold the Son of God, who partook with man in his ge of subjection to Angels, risen to the glory and honour and rule er the world to come designed for man. This He has achieved in s own instance (ver. 9).

4. But though He achieved it in His own instance, it was not for mself alone. The explanation of how He rose to this place is s: He was crowned with glory because He suffered death. And underwent this suffering that He might taste death for every one r. 9).

Ver. 5. *For unto the angels hath he not . . .*; rather, for not unto gels did he put in subjection. There is an unexpressed antithesis in th clauses of the verse—*not unto angels* (but on the contrary to man as prophecy shows, ver. 6) *did he subject the world to come* (as subjected this world). The words are the Author's general eliminary statement. This is supported by adducing Ps. viii., in ich he finds both these things expressed; for that God subjected s world and its inhabitants to Angels is expressed in the words: ou madest him for a little lower than the Angels (ver. 7); and that did not subject the world to come to Angels, in the words: Thou wnedst him with glory and didst put all things under his feet rs. 7, 8). The former idea appears in ver. 2, and elsewhere in ripture (Dan. iv. 13, 17, 23, x. 13, 20), and in the writings of Jewish ologians. In Deut. xxxii. 8 the Sept. renders "Angels of God" ere the Hebrew reads "Children of Israel."—The indefinite *did*

6 subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in

*put* expresses the almost legislative scheme of man's history drawn in Ps. viii.

*The world to come*, lit. **the inhabited world to come** (i. 6). The phrase "to come" does not seem here merely to express the antithesis between "this world" and the new order of things introduced through Christ; with this there is at least included the idea that this new order is still future; comp. city to come (xiii. 14, vi. 5). Throughout the Epistle the great antithesis is "this world" and the "world to come." The former, visible, material, transient, to which belongs, as part of it, the first covenant; the other, real, heavenly, and eternal, access into which is through the new covenant. The first is subjected to Angels, particularly as revealers of the Law; but under their rule seems embraced the whole pre-Christian condition of things, embracing man in his earthly and mortal condition. Salvation is escape from this and possession of the heavenly world. In this world to come the Angels have no more rule, all things without exception are put in subjection to man (ver. 8). From the Old Testament point of view, the world to come is the world from the coming of the Messiah, for the Old Testament drew no lines in the Messianic salvation, the Messianic world was perfect from the moment of Messiah's coming. But in the view of this Christian writer, though powers from the world to come made themselves felt here (ii. 4, vi. 5), and though through hope (vi. 19) and faith believers might be said to be come to it (xii. 22), it was still no more than ready to be revealed. It belonged to a sphere transcending this earth, out of which it would be revealed and descend, and then all that was promised by God's holy prophets would be fulfilled, when the meek should inherit the earth (Ps. xxxvii. 11; Matt. v. 5; Rom. iv. 13), and the dominion under the whole heaven should be given to the people of the saints of the Most High (Dan. vii. 27)—for then earth and heaven would be one. This "world to come" is identical with the "all things" of the Psalm (ver. 8), being "all things" in their final and eternal condition.—*Whereof we speak* means, which is the subject of my writing, rather than, which is the theme of hope and converse among us Christians.

Ver. 6, etc. *But one in a certain place;* **or, one somewhere testified.** This mode of citation seems merely rhetorical, and is in the manner both of the Alexandrians and the Jewish theologians. The quotation is from Ps. viii. This Psalm is regarded by the Author as expressing a gracious determination or solemn deed of God in regard to man, laying out his whole history. This history, as thus designed by God, has two stages—one a brief stage of humility and subjection to Angels, his life in the present world in the flesh, subject to death: Thou madest him for a little time lower than the Angels (ver. 7); and the other a permanent stage of exaltation and glory: Thou crownedst him with glory . . . Thou didst put all things under his feet (vers. 7, 8). This history designed for man is, of course, in respect of the second stage of it, a prediction, and this prediction awaits fulfilment in the world

a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?
7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels: thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over
8 the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But

to come. This is a prediction also of the abrogation of the rule of Angels. The prediction is not yet verified in the case of mankind, but it is verified in the case of Him who subjected Himself to the first stage of man's estate, even Jesus, and with this has passed away the dominion of Angels.

*What is man . . .?* These words express wonder at the condescension and goodness of God, when His designs towards men are considered. For man's temporary subjection to the Angels and the Law disappears before the eternal glory reserved for him in the world to come.—After thou hadst for a season made him lower than the Angels, Thou crownedst him with glory (Tynd.). The retention of this exclamation of wonder shows that the Psalm is not regarded by the Apostle as directly spoken of Christ.—It is evident that "a little" must be taken in the temporal sense: "for a little while" (Geneva, for a season). The whole scope requires this. The words are again used in ver. 9 of the humiliation of the Son, where any reference to the *degree* of His inferiority to Angels would be out of place; and that the phrase should be used of degree in one place and time in another, when the point of the passage lies in the identity of the Son's history with that of man, is an idea only puerile. And it is equally evident that the phrase "lower than the Angels" is not a vague generality, but expresses the distinct idea of the subjection of this world and man to Angels—what is denied in regard to the world to come, ver. 5.[1]—In ver. 8, for *hast put* the indefinite *didst put* is better, in agreement with ver. 7; the Author is not concerned with any time but with a Divine intention expressed in Scripture, which carries its own fulfilment with it.—The division of verses is not happy here; the verse should have ended at "feet," the end of the quotation.

Ver. 8. *For in that he put. . . .* Now the Apostle having finished the quotation, summarizes what it contains and sets it clearly before the mind. It contains a prediction of the dominion of mankind over all things, with no exception. This statement is hardly recalled for the purpose of saying that the Angels also shall be subjected to man, but in order to say that nothing shall be left subjected to Angels. No doubt when the world to come is fully realized, the Angels shall worship the Son (i. 6), and even in the beginnings of it already made they do service for the sake of them who shall inherit salvation (i. 14); but it does not seem necessary for the argument, and is rather strain-

[1] The last clause of ver. 7, "and didst set," etc., is omitted in some of the best MSS.

9 now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

ing the language, to include the Angels in the "all things" that shall be put in subjection to man (comp. xii. 22, etc.). The clause, *but now we see not*, etc., does not state or admit a possible objection, but merely marks a step in the thought in order to pass on to the great historical fact expressed in ver. 9. The destination in regard to man that all things shall be put under his feet is not yet in fact seen realized. This summary clears the way, and now the Author has done with the Psalm and comes to history.

Ver. 9. *But we see Jesus*. . . . ; rather, **but we behold him who hath been made for a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of his suffering of death crowned with glory and honour**, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every one. The word *behold* is different from *see* in ver. 8, and embraces the knowing and apprehension of things beyond the region of actual eyesight, such as the ascended condition of the Son. The expression "Him who hath been made" is definite, and cannot be rendered "one who hath been made." The definiteness is not that of identification with the subject spoken of in the Psalm—that subject is mankind, this is Jesus; the definiteness is that of the historical person, known to all, Jesus. The words *made for a little lower* indicate that He was a man, and *hath been made* suggests that He came from another region into the race of mankind. We behold the known, historical personage, Jesus, whose life on earth in the flesh is familiar to us, which He entered upon, coming down from a higher life above, and who was so completely one of mankind that the words of the Psalm describing man may be used of Him, "made for a little lower than the Angels"—we behold Him crowned with glory. We know the historical truth of His ascension, and realize His place at God's right hand. These are facts of history. That which was predicted of man in the Psalm has been verified in Jesus, the Son of God made man.—But it was necessary for the Author's redemptive argument with his readers, and to justify his language concerning the great salvation (ver. 3), to add an explanation of the facts. The Son was exalted to this place *because of* His suffering of death. These words express the connection between the two parts of His history—His exaltation and His life in the flesh. How much meaning lies in the words it is difficult to say; comp. perhaps i. 3; Phil. ii. 7, etc. The point of death, however, is taken up in the next clause, *that by the grace*, etc., and a more general bearing given to it, which brings it into connection with ver. 5, and sets it as the text for further elucidation in vers. 10–18 that follow.

This clause, *that by the grace of God*, etc., does not depend upon the immediately preceding words, "crowned with glory;" it either takes up the words "for the suffering of death"—suffering which He underwent

that He might taste death for every one—or it gives by way of resumption the general meaning of the history of Jesus as stated in ver. 9.—To *taste* death is to experience it, Matt. xvi. 28; the word neither implies on the one hand the brevity of Christ's subjection to death, as if He only tasted it with the tips of His lips, nor suggests on the other that He endured it in its bitterness. The words *for*, *i.e.* in behalf of, *every one* have no bearing whatever on the technical question of the extent of the atonement; they are general words, indicating that the Son's death was for the benefit of the "man" or mankind spoken of in vers. 6–8, just as they are taken up again in the "many sons" of ver. 10; comp. the similar words of ver. 15 with the limitation of ver. 17. As to the conditions on the individual person's part of enjoying the benefits of the Son's death, see iii. 6, v. 9, vii. 25, ix. 28, and indeed the whole scope of the Epistle.—The Son's tasting death was in behalf of every one, the meaning of which must be ascertained from the contents of vers. 10–18, and from the context, vers. 5–9, which speaks of the Son as He is Head of the new dispensation. Further, it was *by the grace* of God—words taken up in *it became* God, ver. 10.[1]

The Apostle nowhere gives any strict account of the "glory" of the exalted Son. In the Pauline Epistles this glory is either that of the Lord's spiritual body, Phil. iii. 21, or it is the very glory of God visible in the face of the exalted Son, 2 Cor. iv. 6. In this Epistle it is more indefinite, and describes the high dignity of the ascended Son, either generally as being in heaven, or particularly as Messianic King or High Priest over the house of God, iii. 3–6, v. 5. Though the Epistle distinguishes between acts of the Son in heaven, *e.g.* "offering" and "sitting down," the latter of which must be supposed to follow the former, yet the former belongs to His "glory" as High Priest, v. 5, vii. 28. Here His glory seems identified with that destined for man, ver. 7, and so ver. 10. Both He and His brethren are heirs of the world to come, xii. 28, but He is King and they are people.[2]—The Author when saying of Jesus "crowned with glory" does not add, with all things put in subjection to Him. This is not yet true of Him actually, any more than it is of man. He "waits" till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet, as they wait for the re-

[1] Instead of the words, by the grace (*chariti*) of God, a remarkable reading was current in ancient times, without or *apart from* (*choris*) God. The ordinary reading is sustained by the connection, for *by the grace of God* is immediately taken up by *for it became* God. No sense that can be put on *apart from* is relevant in the connection. *Choris* "probably arose from a confusion of letters which might easily take place in papyrus writing" (Westcott and Hort, ii. p. 129).

[2] It need not be argued that the glory of the Son (ver. 9) and that of men (vers. 7, 10) is their glory in the heavenly world, and not the official position merely of the former on earth or men's place in the church (Hofmann). The statement, "while it is a humiliation to *die*, it is glorious to taste death *for others*" (Prof. Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ*, p. 39), contains a fine modern idea, but one to which Scripture has hardly yet advanced. The humiliation of the Son with His death is a "grace" (2 Cor. viii. 9), and a proof of love (John xv. 13; Rom. v. 8), but Scripture does not seem to have permitted to itself the paradox of calling it a glory.

demption of the body (Rom. viii. 23). The distinction made here, however, is that between the two estates of lowliness and exaltation; any distinction between two steps of the latter is unimportant, particularly as the second step is virtually involved in the first (x. 12, 13, i. 2).

The use made of Ps. viii. in the Epistle is extremely interesting. 1. The Psalm as it stands in the Old Testament is not a nature hymn. It is addressed to Jehovah, God of the redemptive covenant, and is uttered from the heart of Israel—O Jehovah our Lord—the people of redemption. There is no such thing as nature poetry or nature writing in the Old Testament: everything there is uttered from the sphere of redemption, which is not antagonistic to the sphere of nature, but assumes this latter sphere into itself. 2. The idea of the Psalm is expressed in the words with which it opens and with which it closes: O Jehovah our Lord, how glorious is Thy name in all the earth. The "name" of Jehovah is that which He is known from His revelation of Himself to be, for the name expresses the known character. The sphere where the name of Jehovah is glorious is in all the earth, that is, the sphere of man's life and experience. The Psalmist expresses his wonder at Jehovah's grace to man upon the earth, and this wonder is heightened when he considers the heavens, God's dwelling-place made by Him for Himself, which reflect His own glory. This contrast between earth and heaven goes through the Psalm, but God's glory in heaven is not the subject of it, but is only touched, as bringing out what Jehovah Himself is, to give deeper colour to His grace to man on earth, the theme of wonder. 3. The detailed picture of God's goodness to man in the position He has given him is contained in ver. 5, etc.,—Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels . . . Thou hast put all things under his feet. These words are not merely historical nor properly prophetical. The Psalm is not a description of anything bygone, it is a picture of the present, the present as it was seen, and its principles taken in and gathered up by the religious feeling of the poet. It is no doubt an ideal picture, but the Author meant it as a description of man's true condition; it is the expression of a deep glimpse, such as was possible only in Israel, into the world and man as they were in his day, amidst all the tendencies which he could perceive, and all the facts lying around him which he observed—sin and grace, and the natural position of man, absorbed but not eliminated in redemption.[1] In moments of high religious feeling and times of splendid success on the part of Israel, the kingdom of God, such a picture might seem no exaggera-

[1] The Psalm is not a reminiscence of Paradise Lost, nor is it directly an anticipation of Paradise Regained. It is a picture of the present or the general. Being an ideal picture, it may describe what was lost in Paradise, though to this loss there is no reference, and for the same reason it may be regarded as a prophecy which when fulfilled will be Paradise Restored. There may be an allusion in it to the history in Gen. i., but there is nothing beyond, and to drag in the history of Paradise into it confuses by details, to which it does not allude, its purely general and ideal character.

tion, but almost actually real. But in times of depression, and when the sceptre departed from the people, the sad contrast between the Psalm and the actual condition of men could not but be keenly felt. Hence the splendid ideal, like all other ideals in the Old Testament, was thrown into the future for fulfilment. It did not lose its truth, but its truth would be found only in another condition of the world, in that world to come which the advent of the Messianic King would introduce. In this way the hymn became a prophecy, not directly of the Messiah Himself, but of man's condition under His rule.

Now it is precisely in this sense that the Psalm is used in the Epistle. It is not regarded as a direct prophecy of the person of the Messiah; it is a prophecy of the position of man in the Messianic kingdom, the world to come. In two points, however, the Apostle seems to have altered the construction of the passage. In the Psalm the words, "Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels . . . Thou didst put all things under his feet," make up one picture, meant to portray the dignity of man, which is strictly the one idea of the hymn. This one picture, however, the Apostle divides into two, under the feeling that the history of man has its reverse side, his present, as well as its glorious side, his future. This reverse side of lowliness is considered to be expressed in the words, "Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels;" and the side of glory is left expressed by the remainder of the words, in harmony with the general scope of the Psalm. And another change naturally followed this: the phrase *a little*, which in the Psalm seems to express *degree*, is understood of time,—for a little while.[1] In this way the Psalm becomes a sketch of man's whole history as laid out in the designs of God, with its two phases,—the one of lowliness and mortality, his earthly state, under the Angels and in bondage to the elements of the world; and the other of glory, when through the Son of God he is emancipated and shares with Him in the rule of the inhabited earth to come.

It is possible that it was the history of the Son that suggested this view of the Psalm. At all events the subject of the Psalm is mankind. Jesus becomes its subject when He comes into the race of man. The Author, however, does not find Jesus predicted in the Psalm directly, nor even indirectly under the name of man, as if the Psalm spoke of a humanity involving Him in itself, and yet to give birth to Him. Jesus does not come out of the race of man, He comes into it: God prepared Him a body. He is, however, true man, and having come into the race of man, the general truth of the Psalm said of man applies to Him, just as He on the other hand, having come into the race of man, realizes in Himself and for it the great destination set before it, and so fulfils the Psalm. For the point of the Author's citation of the Psalm is to show that Jesus, not Angels, is over the world to come. He does this, *first*, by citing the Psalm, which states that the sway of Angels over man is but temporary, and predicts that the world to come shall be subjected to man (vers. 5–8); and *second*, by pointing to the *history* of Jesus, the Son of God, who came into

[1] The Geneva Version already expressed this idea, and so Calvin.

the race of man, and so came under the scope of the prediction, which He has in fact fulfilled (ver. 9),—to which he then adds the explanation *how* Jesus rose to this place, and how in this place He is the Author of salvation.[1]

Vers. 10–18. **It was befitting God to make perfect the Son, the Author of salvation, through sufferings and death.**

**Connection.** — The connection is with the immediately preceding words, "that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one," as these repeat, crowned with glory on account of His suffering death. This point of the Son's tasting death and in general undergoing suffering is now made the subject of commentary. The phrase *to make perfect*, coming so close upon "crowned with glory" (ver. 9), means to raise to that supreme place in salvation which the Son occupies, for the whole section (chaps. i.–ii.) bears upon the Son as elevated to be Head of the world to come, of salvation. He is made perfect as Leader of salvation, ver. 10. But to lead to salvation is not a mere exercise of power, it is a moral process; they who are to be saved are sons of God, and the Saviour is a sanctifier, ver. 11; and to make perfect, though it may be seen realized in the successive external steps of a history, is also a moral process going on under the influence of the external history. At the same time the Son is not an isolated moral person, but the Leader of salvation, and it is in this aspect that He is made perfect.

The passage has reference to the humiliation and sufferings of the Son, which it desires to set in a light that will relieve them of offence. It represents them as a thing which it befitted God to lay on the Son, when He brought many sons to glory, and as something necessary for the Son to undergo if He was to be the Author of salvation to mortal, sinful men. The fitness and the necessity present themselves to the Author's mind from the nature of the case—from consideration of the condition of those to be saved, men subject to death and under bondage to the fear of it; and from his view of what a saviour must be: he must be a sanctifier, ver. 11, or high priest, able to be affected by the feelings and conditions of men, whether in their relation to God or to the world and life, and able to influence them. Salvation must be transacted in this moral and spiritual region; and this implies that the Saviour and those saved must be on the same moral footing and have common relations to God. And they have such. For those saved are to be brought to glory as sons, as the Son, who has been crowned with glory, is their Saviour. He and they, His brethren, are all of God. And in many parts of Scripture He

[1] Others assume that Ps. viii. is here regarded as a direct prophecy of Jesus. This it might well enough be in itself. But several things are against it. 1. An exclamation of wonder (ver. 6) that God should be mindful of His Son is not conceivable. 2. The insertion of the explanatory name *Jesus*, ver. 9, is without meaning, if the *him* in the preceding clause, "we see not yet all things put under him," already referred to the Son. This is so much felt that Lünemann naively remarks that the word Jesus might have been omitted. 3. There is also in the words, "many sons to glory," ver. 10, an undoubted return upon "glory and honour," ver. 7.

appears recognising this relation to them, and calling them brethren (vers. 10–13).—This higher spiritual unity therefore of the Saviour and the saved implied in the words "sons," "sanctifier," and the like, and recognised by the Son, is the presupposition which justifies the actual subjection of the Son to suffering and death. Through no other means could this unity be realized, or could He be made perfect as the Author of salvation (vers. 14–18). This then is the relation of the two parts of the passage, vers. 10–18, to one another. The former part, vers. 10–13, describes the parties and shows what their relations are to one another, relations exhibited in prophetic Scripture; and the latter, vers. 14–18, shows how in order to these relations being truly realized, the Son must undergo sufferings and death.

**Outline.** — We see Jesus crowned with glory by reason of His suffering of death—that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one: for it befitted God, when He brought a fulness of mankind to their destined glory (vers. 7, 8) as sons (through salvation from death), to make the Son, the Author of their salvation, perfect through sufferings, ver. 10. I say, when He brought many "sons," for the Leader of their salvation, or the Sanctifier, and those saved, the sanctified, are all children of God; hence the Son Himself is not ashamed (as the words of prophecy show) to call them brethren, recognising a common relation to God with them, vers. 10–13.

These, then, being the relations which the Saviour and those saved must and do sustain to one another, in order to enter into them it was needful that the Son should take upon Him the whole history of man. 1. The children to be saved being mortal men of flesh and blood in bondage to the fear of death, He in like manner took part in flesh and blood, that through His death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, and free men from their bondage. So He is the Leader of salvation (ver. 10), vers. 14, 15. 2. I say, the fear of death, for as we know it is not among Angels that His saving work is exercised, but among the People of God, the sinful seed of Abraham, therefore it was needful that He should pass through the experiences of men in all points, including death, that He might become a merciful High Priest to make atonement for the sins of the People, as true Sanctifier (ver. 11), vers. 16–18.

The whole passage, vers. 5–18, hangs together, and the right point of view from which to regard it is not at first quite easy to find.

1. Chap. i. 2–4 showed how the Son had risen to the supreme place of Head of the world to come of salvation, chiefly along the line of His Sonship. This supreme place was becoming Him who was Son and Maker of the worlds. Chap. ii. 5, etc., showed how He reached this same place along another line, viz. by realizing the glory destined for man. This He did by participating in the whole history of man.

10 For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

This participation was in order to man's salvation (ii. 3, 10). This history the Son did not take upon Him and go through as an isolated individual man, but as the Author of salvation. And the Apostle, in ver. 9, emphasized the point that the Son's elevation to glory was *on account of* His suffering of death, as the object of His undergoing this was that He might taste death for every man. This *way* of raising the Son to His high place in the economy of salvation is now enlarged upon, apparently with a certain apologetic purpose, and shown to be befitting God and necessary. The passage forms a sort of appendix to chap. i.–ii. 9, and justifies the sufferings of the Son and His death from one point of view, as chap. ix. 16, etc. justifies it from another.

2. Though the passage starts with saying it befitted God (ver. 10), vers. 11–18 are not to be regarded as a formal demonstration of this fitness. The divine fitness is supported by the clause, "bringing many sons to glory," and by the expansion of this idea in vers. 11–13. Ver. 14 onwards, which takes up the idea of making perfect through sufferings, presents the Son's death rather under the aspect of a necessity than a fitness—a necessity, that is, under the supposition of the unity in salvation of the Saviour and those saved, the Sanctifier and the sanctified, exhibited in vers. 10–13. And, though a moral necessity might be regarded as the highest form of the divine fitness, the Son's sufferings are regarded in vers. 14–18 rather as necessary from the nature of the case, and probably the idea of divine fitness had dropped out of the Writer's mind, just as in these verses the process of perfecting the Son is no more regarded as something accomplished by God, but is a history which the Son voluntarily took upon Himself.

Ver. 10. The verse takes up the closing words of ver. 9. The parallelism is evident :—

| | |
|---|---|
| That by the grace of God | For it became Him . . . |
| He might, in behalf of every one, | bringing many sons to glory, |
| taste death. | to make perfect through sufferings, |
| | etc. |

He for whom are all things is God. It is also God who brings many sons to glory (vers. 7, 8). The Captain of their salvation is the Son. "Through sufferings" takes up "taste death," and "crowned with glory on account of His suffering death," ver. 9, and refers chiefly to the suffering of death, vers. 9, 14, 18, v. 8; comp. *suffer*, ix. 26, xiii. 12. And *through* sufferings implies not merely that He went along a way at the end of which was perfection, but that the sufferings were the means which produced (that he might become, ver. 17), as well as the reason that led to (on account of, ver. 9) the perfection.—The term *captain* means leader, then originator to others; in many cases the idea that the leader shares in that to which he leads others falls away, and the word merely means *author*. Here the idea that the Son goes before the

saved in the same path ought perhaps to be retained, vi. 20, xii. 2. It need not be said that *captain* is not here a military term. The same word is translated "prince," Acts iii. 15, v. 31.

*To make perfect* does not mean to endow with all excellent qualities, but to bring to the *end*, that is, the appropriate or appointed end, the end corresponding to the idea. What this end is in any case will be suggested from that which is made perfect. Here it is the Author of salvation, or, as He is called, ver. 11, the Sanctifier. To make Him perfect will be to bring Him into that condition in which He is ideally complete as the Author of salvation, and Sanctifier. Coming so near "crowned with glory," ver. 9, and in the whole connection of chaps. i.–ii., "perfection" describes the Son's supreme place in the economy of salvation. This is not, however, a mere external glory, an idea unknown to the Epistle, but the end of a history of the Leader of salvation, every step of which was both an entering into His mission as Saviour and a making of Him more complete in that vocation (see Note on "Purify . . . Make perfect").

The word it *became* or befitted God takes up "by the grace of God" (ver. 9), it befitted God who is gracious, though the words used as a periphrasis for God set the fitness in the most absolute light. It befitted Him *for whom and by whom* are all things, or, **on account of whom and through whom**—by reason of whom and through whose agency all things are, however they be named—the sum of things, whether we call them nature or providence or grace. This act of making perfect through sufferings is among them and befitting Him; for bringing many sons to glory comes under "on account of whom" (Eph. i. 5), and to make perfect, etc. comes under "through whom." This solemn designation of God is not brought in in order to carry the implication that what such a Being does *must be* befitting Him; rather this act is attributed to Him, and the solemn affirmation is made that it became Him who is to be thought of under this most lofty conception of Him (comp. Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. viii. 6).

*It became . . . bringing many sons*, etc. What it befitted God to do was not, of course, to bring many sons to glory—such a statement did not need to be made; nor yet to make the Son the Captain of salvation—the fitness of this hardly required a special emphasis; but to make the Son, the Author of salvation, perfect through the suffering of death—and yet not this simply: what befitted God was to make perfect the Author of salvation through sufferings, bringing (or, when He brought) at the same time many sons to glory. The fitness was in God, Him on account of whom and through whom all things are. The act befitting Him was to make the Author of salvation perfect through sufferings. This was befitting when He brought many sons to glory. The ground of the fitness, so far as it is expressed, lay in the relation of this act to the other act, *bringing*, etc. —*Many* is not used in opposition to *all*, but states positively that the sons are many, and thus perhaps adds a shade of confirmation to the fitness. The words resume vers. 7, 8; comp. ix. 28. Bringing sons to glory is called salvation in the next clause. Salvation (ii. 3, i. 14)

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them

is God's bringing men in the relation of sons to Himself to glory. And the affirmation of fitness receives support from the very words used—sons, as the Saviour is Son, and unto glory, as He has a glory befitting His sonship (i. 2).

Vers. 11–13. These verses are subordinate to ver. 10, taking up and illustrating the unity of the Saviour and those saved, suggested in the terms of ver. 10, "sons," etc., and in this way continuing to sustain the assertion in ver. 10, *it became Him*, etc.—*For* is not argumentative, as if intended to justify the use of the word "sons," and prove the sonship of men in salvation—this needed no proof to the Christian Hebrews, who were believers of long standing; *for* is repetitory of "sons," etc., the idea of the unity being thrown into other words, *all of one;* and these last words are sustained and exemplified by expressions of the Son Himself from Old Testament Scripture.—The phrase, "Leader of their salvation" (ver. 10), is exchanged for "He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified," words which more accurately define what saving is, and thus make more prominent the moral unity of the Saviour and those saved, which is the presupposition which explains the Saviour's subjection to sufferings. To sanctify is to consecrate unto God as a people for His service (ix. 14, x. 29). This consecration is effected by an offering which purifies the conscience from sins (x. 10). See Note on Purify, Sanctify, etc.[1]

*Are all of one;* the *one* here is most naturally to be taken as God, so that the words resume "sons" of ver. 10—the Sanctifier and they who are sanctified are all children of God. Though very rarely, God is called Father of Christ in the Epistle (i. 5), and His fatherhood of believers is expressed in xii. 7, etc. The word *of* is to be taken generally, and hardly expresses the specific idea that they are begotten of God. The point is not how they became sons of God, but the relation in which in fact they stand to Him. This point seems kept in view throughout the passage, as when it is said, "call them brethren" (ver. 12), the "children," ver. 13, and again ver. 14, and "His brethren" (ver. 17).[2]—The words *are all of one* do not express a

[1] The participles "He who sanctifies," etc., are here used as substantives; they do not describe progressive action, for this is not the idea of "sanctify" in the Epistle, nor yet an action often repeated, as on successive generations, an idea still less to be found in the Epistle: He has sanctified the People through His blood (xiii. 12). The words are timeless designations of the two parties, taken from the part characteristic of each.

[2] The words *all of one* might mean all of one piece, one whole. If this were the meaning, the point of unity would still lie in their common relation to God, and the unity though wider than sonship would embrace sonship as its chief element. Some of the passages quoted, *e.g.* I will put my trust in Him, seem to favour this more general sense.—Others take *of one* to mean, descended from one, *e.g.* Abraham or Adam. But this seems to invert the argument of the passage, which is to the effect that because they are all of one—in order to realize this unity—the Son took part in flesh and blood. The higher religious unity between Sanctifier and sanctified (vers. 12, 13) required for its realization the physical unity as the basis for sufferings and death.

12 brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren;
in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.
13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold

general principle, viz. that Sanctifier and sanctified must be all of one in order that these relations may obtain between them; they assert a fact which obtains in the relations of this Sanctifier and those sanctified by Him, a fact expressed already in the word "sons;" and this fact explains His language regarding them in Old Testament Scripture, and is illustrated by this language—He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Vers. 12, 13, contain passages from Old Testament prophecy in which the relations of the Sanctifier and those sanctified in common to God, and the Son's consciousness of them, are expressed. 1. These passages are here regarded as directly prophetic, expressing by anticipation the relation of the Son to those whom He saves, and their common relation to God. That conception of prophecy which we express by the term "typical" does not seem anywhere entertained in the Epistle. See on x. 5, etc. 2. The question, when is the Son supposed to use these words regarding Himself and men? is quite unimportant, and was probably not before the Writer's mind. The quotations are adduced, as usual (see on i. 5), simply for the sake of the relations which they express. They exhibit the Son entering into His actual vocation as Saviour.

The first passage is from Ps. xxii. 22; the second from Isa. viii. 17, though similar passages are 2 Sam. xxii. 3 (Ps. xviii. 2), Isa. xii. 2; and the third from Isa. viii. 18. Psalm xxii. is probably not an early Psalm; it is uncertain who is the primary subject of it. In language and ideas it bears a remarkable resemblance to the prophecies, Isa. xl.–lxvi., and it is not improbable that the subject of it is the Servant of the Lord (Acts iv. 30). Words from it had been used by Christ upon the cross (Matt. xxvii. 46), and in Him alone are the ideas of it properly fulfilled. The primary subject of the passages in Isaiah is no doubt the prophet himself. There was much in common between Isaiah in his day, and Christ in His vocation among His people. 1. In Isaiah's time had begun that national hardening and spiritual insensibility which continued to the time of Christ and reached its climax under His teaching—hence He identifies the insensibility that confronted Him with that spoken of by Isaiah (Isa. vi. 9 with Matt. xiii. 13, etc.). 2. Amidst these circumstances Isaiah assumed a peculiar position, he broke with the ecclesiastical and political constitution and authorities of his time. In pursuance of the oracle (Isa. viii. 12, etc.), not to fear what this People feared, but to let Jehovah be his fear, who should be for a sanctuary, he gathered around him a band of disciples, among whom he bound up this testimony of God, and along with whom he waited for the salvation of the Lord, looking to the future (viii. 17). United with him, as expressing faith in Jehovah and the salvation of the future by the very names which they bore, were His children. Thus he and those

14 I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death

disciples about him formed the nucleus of a new church.—Such analogies do not relieve all the difficulties attending the application of the words to the Son. The steps by which they came to be applied to the Messiah lay behind the Author of the Epistle and were not thought of by him.[1] In the first passage the Messiah expresses His consciousness that believing men are His brethren, for He and they are all members of one great congregation or church, and He declares to them the name and praise of God—His name and praise as God of salvation, as the Psalm shows (comp. Heb. v. 8, 9). In the second He expresses His faith in God like any one of His believing brethren (Heb. xii. 2). And in the third He presents Himself before God, or calls attention to Himself among men, as on the same footing with the children whom God has given Him. The "children" are God's children, in the spiritual sense, whom He has given to Him (John xvii. 6), and as one with whom He presents Himself.—In all these passages it is the spiritual unity of the Sanctifier and the sanctified in their relation to God that is exhibited. This is the presupposition that requires the community of *nature*, which is not yet referred to in vers. 10–13, but is treated in vers. 14–18.

Vers. 14–18 resume and expand the point of ver. 10, "make perfect through sufferings,"—the necessity and purpose of the sufferings is shown.

Ver. 14. *The children . . . flesh and blood*, lit. seeing then the children have become sharers in common of blood and flesh (order as in Eph. vi. 12). The "children" are God's children as before. "Flesh and blood" is a designation of human nature as mortal, 1 Cor. xv. 50; or in general, Matt. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 16. In the Old Testament the corresponding expression is simply "flesh."—The Son in like manner took part, participated, in the *same things*, *i.e.* blood and flesh. The mere taking part in human nature is not the point which engages the interest of the Apostle here. The incarnation in itself probably was not felt to need justification. The incarnation is referred to because it was a necessary preliminary to the sufferings, as the sphere of existence to which the Son essentially belonged made Him incapable of death. In order to be able to die, He must take part in flesh and blood. In another passage (x. 5), the preparing of a body for Him is also said to be in order that He might offer it. And in another passage still (ix. 15, etc.), the necessity of His death is argued, though in other aspects (see notes).

The object of the Son's participating in flesh and blood was, that through (His) death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and free all those in bondage to the fear of

[1] The Sept. inserts, "and He will say," before chap. viii. 17, and this may have helped to make the reference to the Messiah more easy.

he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is,
15 the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were

death. These two points are closely connected, and express but different sides of one object, which was to be accomplished through death. The present is the only passage where the devil is mentioned, and the precise meaning of the passage is difficult to reach. He who had the power of death is the devil. The *power of death* is not the power which belongs to death, nor the power which death is—a vague sense of "power" quite improbable. Greek writers use such phrases as, to have the power of the sea, of the Romans, of Samos, and the like, meaning, to have the rule over them. To have the power of death must mean, to have the rule of it, or power over it. This power over it cannot mean, however, power to inflict it, for though such an idea is not unknown in the Old Testament (Job ii. 6), it is not a current notion. In ix. 27 death is a divine appointment for all men. The phrase seems properly to mean that the devil's sway is exercised in the realm of death. The idea is not more precisely defined. In Rev. ix. 11 Satan is probably called angel of the abyss, that is, Hades, but in the present passage "death" can hardly be exactly the same as "the dead."—To *destroy* is to bring to nought, to render powerless, probably to strip of his rule. The word is a favourite one in the Pauline Epistles, and is used of destroying or bringing to nought death itself, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 26. It is not said here that the Son through death destroyed death, but him who had the power of death.

Ver. 15. *And deliver them who . . .*, lit. deliver those as many as, that is, all them who. This is not to be regarded as a second object of the Son's death; it is doubtful even if it be stated as the consequence of destroying the devil, it is rather that same act regarded from a different point of view. Corresponding to the rule of the devil in the realm of death, there is in men's minds a bondage through fear of death. From this bondage Christ delivers them through death. This fear of death is not the mere natural recoil of the living from encountering death. It is the moral and religious fear of it. In the Old Testament death is separation from all living, even from God. The fear of this runs through the whole Old Testament, and is generally expressed in connection with sickness or other tokens of God's displeasure; comp. Ps. vi., xxx., xxxix. 11, etc.; Isa. xxxviii. 10, etc. So Heb. ix. 27, after death cometh the judgment. It is the reference to sin that is the common point between "him who had the power of death" and "all them who were in bondage through the fear of death." The devil's sway in all the realm to which death extends is due to his introducing sin into the world, and by sin death. In the Old Testament, indeed, Satan is not identified with the serpent of Eden, but the identification is already made in the Book of Wisdom (ii. 24, by envy of the devil death entered into the world), with which the Author was familiar (see on i. 3); comp. Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2.—It is scarcely probable that in the phrase "destroy . . . the devil," there is any reference to the meaning

16 all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of

of the word devil, the *accuser;* or in the phrase "fear of death," any reference to men's fear in drawing near to worship God. The last idea is too far-fetched.

The question comes, how did the Son through (His) death destroy him who had the power of death and free all them in bondage through the fear of death? It is impossible to be certain of the precise idea intended. 1. Vers. 17, 18, represent the sufferings of the Son, including death, as necessary from another point of view, viz. in order to make Him a merciful High Priest to make propitiation for the sins of the people. It is scarcely likely that the Apostle would first say that His death was necessary to atone for sins, and then say it was necessary to fit Him to make atonement. It is probable, therefore, that not this precise notion of making atonement, but a more general one lies in the expression. 2. And the same general idea is suggested by the connection, which speaks of the Son being "made perfect," *i.e.* elevated to His supreme headship over the world of salvation, through sufferings. The words *that through death*, etc. are strong, and intimate that the object of the incarnation was that He might wield the weapon of death to destroy him who had the power of death.—The whole passage chaps. i.–ii. is a contrast of the two universal dispensations. In the one there was subjection to the Law of Angels and death (chap. ii. 7; 2 Cor. iii. 7); even the priests, the ministers of salvation, were men that die, vii. 8. In the other the Head is the Prince of life, a High Priest of whom it is witnessed that He liveth. And the Son came into the life of man that by going victoriously through it all He might altogether alter its complexion. More particularly, the Son was without sin, iv. 15. He encountered death without fear, Satan had nothing in him (John xiv. 30). In death His fellowship with God remained unbroken, and His supplication for salvation from death was heard for His godly fear, v. 7. In Him all the protests of Old Testament saints against death as separation from God, and their aspirations for an overleaping of the condition of the dead (Ps. xvi. 10, xlix. 15), became translated into history. But this history was not the history of an isolated individual, but of the Leader of salvation (ver. 10). And through this history death assumed to "every one" (ver. 9) who believed on Him another aspect; it became part of a new order of things, and the gate to that glory and honour to which the Son Himself had entered through it. In such a general passage as this the other idea of the atonement of sins through the Son's death may be included. But the effects of the Son's death seem rather to be looked at as following from the facts of His own history—though again this history was that of the Leader of salvation, and it is this that gives it its meaning to all them in bondage from the fear of death.

Ver. 16, etc. Necessity of the Son's sufferings from another point of view. *For verily he took not . . . nature of angels;* lit. for as we

17 Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation

**know he taketh not hold of angels, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham.** The phrase *as we know* expresses not only something that all will admit, but something naturally suggested by the preceding words—"all them in bondage from the fear of death." That this idea is still in the Writer's mind appears from the word "Angels," used in antithesis to them of whom the Son takes hold to help them—they are not pure spirits, they are mortal men of flesh and blood. Mortal, however, carries also with it the idea of sinful (Job iv. 19), they are the seed of Abraham—the means necessary for whose salvation we know.—The present *taketh* does not refer to the Son's present operation in heaven; the statement is general—it is not among Angels that His work of saving is exercised. To *take hold of* has parallels in Isa. xli. 9, 10, Jer. xxxi. 32 (Heb. viii. 9), and means to lay hold of with the hand, the purpose of laying hold of being unexpressed and to be learned from the connection. The purpose here is to deliver or help. The phrase does not mean to assume the nature of.—There are two curious points in connection with this expression: one is, that the Greek expositors generally explain it to mean *take on him the nature*, as in the English Version; and the other is that when the sense now usually admitted to be the right one from the connection was suggested at the Reformation, it was so unwonted that Beza characterized the suggestion as "an accursed audacity."—The *seed of Abraham* is to be taken literally. The believing Hebrews are in the view of the Author the People of God. See Introd. ch. ii. 2, and Note on the Covenants.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore in all things it behoved;* or, **it behoved him in all things** to be made like. To be made like His brethren, *i.e.* of the seed of Abraham, in all things, is to have the same history as they, the same experience of life and death, for this was the way of sufferings that led to His perfection.—*That he might be;* more fairly, **might become.** The Epistle identifies the Son's priestly acts with His priesthood, and hence it speaks of His becoming a priest when He actually performed His priestly offices (see Note on the Priesthood). This way of speaking must be recognised, for it is wholly inept to draw a distinction between His becoming "merciful and faithful" and His becoming a "high priest." The Son was at all times the Leader of salvation, and at all times strictly everything that He ever was, yet He authenticated Himself as High Priest and Author of salvation by entering into His vocation as its occasions successively presented themselves, and thus He might be said to "become" High Priest. Here His sufferings in life and death, though in another aspect they might be the actual working out of man's salvation, are looked at as having a reflex influence upon Himself, fitting Him to be the Author of salvation. Comp. the similar passage, v. 1–10. The point whether the Son was a High Priest before His actual perform-

18 for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

ance of his high-priestly functions probably never was before the Author's mind.

*Merciful* means compassionate; the shade of meaning belonging to "mercy" in modern English of sparing the guilty, formed no part of its old sense.—*Faithful* is said of the high priest's relation to God rather than to men: see iii. 2–6, where "faithful" is again taken up. Faithfulness to the duties of the office toward God is mainly compassion towards men. Calvin's saying that Christ did not need to go through sufferings in order to become pitiful, but His doing so was necessary for us that we might be assured of His pity, is hardly just to the scope of the passage.—*To make reconciliation;* rather, **to make propitiation.** His becoming a merciful and faithful High Priest enabled Him to offer for the people with a right mind. See on v. 1, etc.—The *People* are again the seed of Abraham, the historical People of God, for the covenants are continuous.

The connection with the preceding by means of *wherefore* seems to be: I say the fear of death, for it is not Angels that He helps, but the seed of Abraham, the means needful for whose salvation we know—it is priestly mediation and atonement, wherefore He was made in all points like His brethren of Abraham's seed, that He might become a true High Priest, to make His offering for them with the duly compassionate mind.—This is the other aspect under which the necessity of His sufferings is viewed, and that these sufferings included death appears from next verse.

Ver. 18. *For in that . . . being tempted;* these words have been taken in a great many ways. The simplest and that most in harmony with other passages (iv. 15, v. 2, etc., xii. 2, etc.) appears to be this: **for having himself been tempted in that which he hath suffered,** He is able, etc. The immediate connection speaks of His becoming a compassionate High Priest; now His compassion is a moral and redemptive one: it is not mere pity for men racked by physical pains, or by pain in itself, however arising; it is compassion for men tempted by sufferings towards sin or unbelief. The point of the passage, therefore, lies in the word "tempted," as the end of the verse shows —He is able to succour them that are tempted. The sufferings are the cause of the temptation. The words, "in that which (or, wherein) He hath suffered," point to the definite circle of sufferings which He hath endured and gone through with, in being made in all points like unto His brethren (ver. 17). These sufferings at every point crossed the innocent human instinct to evade them; but being laid on Him by the will of God and in pursuance of His high vocation, they thus became temptations. And here lies the analogy between Him and the Hebrews (xii. 3); and having thus been tempted in that wherein He hath suffered, He is able to succour them that are tempted.—It is difficult to make out the precise sense of the English

Version. It seems to mean: inasmuch as He Himself hath suffered from His temptations. This cannot mean that the temptations presented to His godly mind produced a recoil accompanied with intense pain. Such a meaning is too akin to sentiment. On this construction of the words, however, the suffering arises from the temptation and not conversely, it is the pain which to be tempted produces. It would be difficult to condescend on what this pain is. Such a sense appears too subtle for the Epistle, which seems always to mean by Christ's sufferings the external hardships to which He was subjected (comp. xii. 2). And what the words seem to say is that Christ has compassion on men tempted by sufferings, not on men pained by temptations.—The *help* which He gives is elsewhere said to be received at the throne of grace (iv. 16), the help comes from God over all, who in Christ is gracious. The link of connection between the throne and us is not supplied. Elsewhere the Spirit of grace is referred to (x. 29). It is not certain, however, that the Apostle in this way completes the chain. The help which the Son gives is given through the throne of God, the throne of grace (see on vii. 25); this help may be mediated by the Spirit; if so, what the Spirit brings to remembrance is the things of Christ, His sympathy learned through sufferings, thus giving men to realize their fellowship with Him, as again it is this sympathy that moves Him—and thus the circle is complete.—It is the part of the High Priest not only to offer for the people (ver. 17), but to save to the uttermost those whom He hath sanctified by His offering (vii. 25). This verse expands ver. 17 on this line, and completes its statements.

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## NOTE ON THE SON.

A few general things may here be gathered together from the Epistle regarding the Son. — 1. The name by which the Saviour is most frequently called in the Epistle is the historical name Jesus, ii. 9, iii. 1, vi. 20, vii. 22, x. 19, xii. 2, 24, xiii. 12; or Christ, iii. 6, 14, v. 5, vi. 1, ix. 11, 14, 24, 28, xi. 26.[1] Less frequent designations are Jesus Christ, x. 10, xiii. 8, 21; the Lord, ii. 3, comp. i. 10; our Lord, vii. 14; or, our Lord Jesus, xiii. 20. The distinctively Pauline title, Christ Jesus, does not occur (see on iii. 1). The simple word "Son" is used in several places, i. 1, vii. 28, comp. (i. 5, iii. 6) v. 8;[2] elsewhere "the Son," i. 8; or, more fully, the Son of God, vi. 6, vii. 3, x. 29; and in one passage where His historical and present conditions are brought together, Jesus the Son of God, iv. 14.

2. The Son is spoken of as existing in three estates: His pre-

[1] The article with the name Christ is scarcely to be rendered *the* Christ; Christ seems rather everywhere a proper name.

[2] It is doubtful whether in these cases *Son* be used as a proper name, or in the sense of (one who is) a son,

sent condition of honour and glory, ii. 9, iii. 3; His earthly life, or the days of His flesh, v. 7; and His state of pre-existence before coming into the world, i. 2, 3, x. 5. He bears the name of Son in each of these conditions, for this is His characteristic name, describing His essential relation to God, a relation unaffected by change of state. The name is directly applied to Him in His exalted state, iii. 6, iv. 14, vii. 28. It equally belonged to Him in the days of His flesh, i. 2, v. 8. The name is not directly given to Him in His pre-existing state, but the inference that it was applicable is inevitable. It was the same Son in whom God spake to us, through whom He made the worlds, i. 2; and there is no hint that the name Son became the possession of a Being already existing on His entering into the flesh. On the contrary, the relation of the clauses in i. 2, 3, implies that in the Author's view the heirship of all things, to which He was appointed on His ascension, was befitting Him as in Himself Son, i. 2, just as His sitting down at God's right hand was becoming and possible, because in His nature He was the brightness of God's glory, i. 3. Origination from God and likeness to God are the essential elements of divine sonship, and these two characteristics belonged to the Son in His pre-existent state, i. 3. It is probable that the words cited from Ps. 2, *I have begotten thee*, mean nothing more than the words in the other clause, *Thou art my Son*, and consequently that the idea of the generation of the Son is not to be found in the words (see notes on i. 5). Believers are sons of God, ii. 10, but the idea that they are begotten of God is scarcely to be found in the passage. The term "first-born" denotes rank in sonship, conferring heirship, and is applied to the Son as Heir, i. 6; and according to one view of xii. 23 (see notes), believers, as sharing His rank and inheritance, are called the church of the first-born. Chap. i. 3 does not carry on i. 2, but affords a parallel statement in the form of an image, and the image does not suggest the idea of generation.

3. Most of what is said of the Son in His pre-existing state is contained in i. 2, 3, though some of the things said there are repeated in other passages. The pre-existing state is alluded to very little, and chiefly because it explains the present condition of exaltation, which was not possible except to a being essentially Son of God. God made the worlds through the Son, i. 2, and in i. 10 He is directly addressed as Lord, of whose hands the heavens are the work. The words of i. 3 state that the pre-existing Son took His origin from God, that He was absolutely like God, and that He was distinct from God. The rays of God's glory concentrated themselves in another Being wholly corresponding to God. The words, "brightness of God's glory and very image of His person," describe the Son strictly in Himself, whether manifested to other beings or not, they do not describe Him merely as the revelation of God.—The Son is eternal; He has neither beginning of days nor end of life, vii. 3. He is called eternal Spirit, though the meaning of this phrase is disputed (see notes on ix. 14). The Epistle has not called the Son in His pre-existing state God,

though it bestows that name on Him as exalted King, i. 8;[1] it does not bring His present state into connection with His pre-existing state further than to intimate that the present state was becoming and only possible to a Being such as He was in His state of pre-existence. In His pre-existing state the Son upheld all things by the word of His power, i. 3,—a word here made parallel to the Almighty creative word of God by which the worlds were framed, xi. 3. This general statement, however, is not anywhere broken up into details, so as to exhibit the relations of the Son to particular events or creatures. In His earthly state the Son was made lower than the Angels, ii. 9, which implies that before He was higher; but no particular relation of the pre-existing Son to Angels is indicated. In His present state He is better than the Angels, i. 4; but it is when His present glory and heirship shall be manifested and realized at His coming in His kingdom, that the Angels shall worship Him, i. 6. In iii. 3 He is said to have built the house of God. If this referred to the house of God in general, even in Old Testament times, there would be indicated a redemptive activity of the Son before He came in the flesh. This is scarcely, however, the meaning (see notes on iii. 1–6).[2]

4. In His former state the Son was a supernatural Being, belonging to the sphere of heaven, the abode of God. From thence He came into the world of men, x. 5, and thither He returned. His coming, and especially His return as High Priest, opened the heavenly world to men, iv. 16, x. 19, xii. 22. His coming among men was entirely unmediated: God prepared Him a body, x. 5; He took part in flesh and blood, ii. 14; though He also sprung of the tribe of Judah, vii. 14, He had no relations with humanity by nature which made His coming into the race of man probable or necessary; neither had humanity beforehand any such lofty determination impressed upon it by God as that it should at the last give birth to Him (see on Ps. viii.). He did not come out of humanity, He came into it, ii. 9, x. 5. Nevertheless He was true man, and mankind may now claim Him and what He did, ii. 9. He came to do the will of God—in this case His specific will, that He should offer Himself a sacrifice for sins, x. 7–10; comp. ii. 14.

The Epistle does not speculate on how it was possible for the pre-existing Son to become man, nor on the effects of this on His previous form of being, nor on the nature of His person in the days of His flesh. The question whether what was true of Him in His former state, that He upheld all things by the word of His power, still remained true, is left without answer. He was the Son equally now as before, but He had become man. The expressions, "God prepared him a body," x. 5, and, "He became partaker in flesh and blood," ii. 14,

[1] On the Doxology, xiii. 21, see notes there.

[2] As the Angels are the instruments of God's providence, and as the Law was given by them (ii. 2) and the Old Testament world put under them (ii. 5), the antithesis between them and the Son everywhere put by the Author seems to imply that he did not consider the Son's activity to extend to the Old Testament world.

throw into relief His pre-existing state, but cast little light on the Author's view of the nature of His person when incarnate. The language used implies that He is conceived as having wholly descended from heaven to the earth.

The Epistle is mainly interested in insisting on the Son's true humanity; and this chiefly with the view of showing how He is a true Captain of salvation and High Priest, ii. 10–18, iv. 14–v. 10, though also in order to encourage the Hebrews by His example under His sufferings, xii. 1, etc. This purpose is pursued with considerable richness of detail, both in regard to events and principles. Allusion to incidents is fuller than in the Pauline Epistles; not only is the cross referred to, xii. 2, and the contradiction of sinners, xii. 3, but also the agony, v. 7, and even the incident of the crucifixion being without the gate, xiii. 12. The Resurrection is once referred to directly, xiii. 20, comp. v. 7, ii. 9; but the Ascension, owing to its importance as the Son's entrance into the heavenly sanctuary, occupies the place assigned to the Resurrection in the other Epistles. The fulness of the Son's humanity and the reality of His human experience are set in all possible lights. He was true man—like all the children, He took part in flesh and blood, ii. 14, x. 5. He was man in man's first stage of humility, subject to suffering and death (ii. 6, 7), as He is now in the second (ii. 7, 8) —made for a little lower than the Angels, and crowned with glory and honour, ii. 9. His human experience was in all things similar to that of man—made in all things like unto His brethren, ii. 17. He had a moral history agreeing with theirs—tried in all points like as we are, apart from sin, iv. 15; and the experience and insight and sympathy learned in this history abide with Him still, ii. 18, v. 9. In His religious life He was related to God as men are, ii. 12, 13. He was not thrown into a world the meaning of which was a riddle to Him, nor was the goal of His life hidden from Him: He lived by faith, having respect to that which is unseen and hoped for (xi. 1), and for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, xii. 2. Faith indeed in Him was for the first time true; He began it and pursued the course of it unto the end, xii. 2. In the exercise of this faith He appealed to God the Saviour in the extreme moment of His life and was answered, v. 7: God brought Him again from the dead, xiii. 20, and set Him heir of all things, i. 2. Through these sufferings in life and death He was made perfect as the Leader of salvation, ii. 10; He attained to such a place in the universe, and such a condition of mind and feeling, as fitted Him to be the true High Priest of men, v. 9, vii. 28, ii. 10; He was crowned with glory, ii. 9, and became merciful and faithful, ii. 17, able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, iv. 15, and to bear gently with them that are out of the way, v. 3; and having learned obedience, He became the Author of salvation to them that obey Him, v. 8, 9. His development under the experiences of His history does not seem regarded in the Epistle as an advance in virtue or a confirmation of His condition of innocence; it is rather a growth into His vocation of Leader of salvation. He was without sin, iv. 16, vii. 26. Such a question as that sometimes

discussed, whether the Son "assumed human nature" in its unfallen or corrupt condition, would hardly occur to the Writer—a human nature distinct from the personal will of the individual being an abstraction the idea of which he was not likely to entertain. The miraculous conception of the Son is not alluded to, for the words x. 5 have no such special sense.

5. The Son sat down at the right hand of God. To this place He passed through the heavens, iv. 14; He entered within the veil, vi. 20; was made higher than the heavens, vii. 26; entered into the holy place, ix. 12—into heaven itself before the face of God, ix. 24. There He abides for ever, the high-priestly Representative of the People, and Surety of the eternal covenant. As exalted He is Lord, vii. 14, xiii. 20, though the name is applied to Him by the Author retrospectively when referring to His earthly life, ii. 3. The connection between His exaltation and His previous history is variously described. God set Him heir of all things, a dignity becoming Him as Son, as it was meet in another way, because He was the Maker of the worlds, i. 2. He sat down at the right hand of God, a place corresponding to His nature as the effulgence of God's glory, though reached through making purification of sins, i. 3; comp. x. 12, xiii. 12. He was crowned with glory because of His suffering of death, ii. 9. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows because He had loved righteousness, i. 9. He was thought worthy of the glory of being over the house of God, a glory befitting One who built the house, iii. 4, x. 21. These passages leave the Author's view of the connection between the Son's exaltation and His former history rather indefinite. Some of them seem to set His exaltation in the light of a reward (Phil. ii. 9). The history through which the Son went corresponded to the history appointed for man in Ps. viii. This history, however, was not appointed to man on the basis of nature, but of redemption, and the Son's going through it was a step in salvation. Nevertheless His history was truly personal and human. He fulfilled that which was set before man, and so He is our Forerunner, vi. 20, and Leader of our salvation. The meaning of this, however, is not that His single case realized the idea of salvation and settled the principle,—that, He having come into the race of man, mankind under His leadership and in Him once for all fought its way to a result which henceforth merely remained to be distributed over the individual members of the race. The view of salvation set forth is quite different. Every economy or covenant is virtually a priesthood; the Saviour is specifically a Sanctifier or High Priest. Under this view both the incarnation and the life of the Son is conceived. He received a body that He might make it an offering, x. 5–10; otherwise, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, ii. 14, 15. And His life in the flesh is a process of initiation into His vocation as Saviour, that is, as High Priest, a making of Him perfect in this character. To be true High Priest He must grow into the experiences of men, and learn their relations both towards God, v. 8, and towards the world or life, ii. 17, iv. 14, etc., and therefore He must go through all their history, especi-

ally on its severer side. Salvation distinctively is accomplished by His high-priestly act of offering Himself for the sanctification of the people, ii. 17, ix. 14, x. 10, 14. Thus the Son's place of exaltation is conceived in various ways. In the widest view, it was a place befitting Him who was the Son of God, for His humiliation was but temporary and for the purposes of His Messianic vocation. More narrowly, it was but the culminating step in this Messianic career itself, indeed the true entrance upon His Messiahship (Ps. cx. 1; Acts ii. 36). Yet finally, His Messianic vocation was drawn into the current of a personal life—although the Epistle chiefly contemplates even His personal experiences and acts in their public Messianic relations; comp. xiii. 20 with v. 7, ii. 14, 15.

The Son sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, i. 3; otherwise, on the right hand *of the throne* of the Majesty in the heavens, viii. 1; comp. xii. 2. This seems to mean that He does not sit *on* the primary throne of God. His glory is not the glory of God, the majesty of the universe. Neither is it said to be the glory of His own pre-existing state, nor yet is it any glory belonging to His own spiritual body (see on i. 13 and ii. 9). His glory is simply the supreme dignity to which He has been elevated, which is that of Messianic King and great High Priest. He is King, and has a sceptre which is the sceptre of righteousness, and a throne which is for ever, i. 8. His rule is the rule of the Messianic King, that is, the King of God's redemptive kingdom. This kingdom is not yet, but is destined to be, universal; He is set heir of all things, but waits till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet, i. 2, x. 13. This shall be when He is brought again into the world, when He appears a second time unto salvation, and then all the Angels of God shall worship Him, i. 6, ix. 28. The relation of this rule to the primary rule of God or to His own primary upholding of all things by the word of His power is not indicated.[1] Neither is it easy to detect the view of the Epistle as to the relation of this rule to His high-priestly function, nor how far He actually exercises His kingly rule while waiting (x. 13). Any power which He puts forth in behalf of His people seems exercised within the sphere of His high-priesthood. He helps, ii. 18, but it is those that are tempted, and they receive the help at the throne of grace, iv. 16, comp. vii. 25; He is over the house of God, iii. 6, but it is as a great High Priest, x. 21; He is the great Shepherd of the sheep, xiii. 20, but it is in the blood of an eternal covenant. At all events, the work of the Son in His present state in behalf of men is presented mainly on its high-priestly side (vii. 25), the kingly trait contained in the Melchizedek priesthood is little insisted on,

[1] "The Son as God hath a natural dominion over all. To this He can no more be appointed than He can be to be God. . . . This . . . most high God . . . cannot be appointed an heir by any other. But He who is so this most high God, as to be the eternal Son of the Father and made man, may, in respect of the office which in the nature of man He undertook to discharge, be made heir of all by His Father."—OWEN on i. 2.

and retreats into the background (see on vii. 1–10); when He enters upon His kingdom in its fulness, then His kingly rule will be the chief thing, though His priestly mediation may not cease, for He is a priest for ever.

The Sonship of Christ is the fundamental idea of the Epistle. It is this relation to God that enables Him to be the Author of salvation to men.

As Son He is the revealer of God and His designs of grace. He is the last and greatest messenger of God to men, coming from the heavenly world and laying it open—the world where God is as He is in Himself, and where all things abide that are true and essential and eternal. Under such forms the Epistle expresses the absoluteness and finality of the revelation given by the Son (see on xii. 22). He announces the second and eternal covenant.

The Messianic King in prophecy is universal ruler, Ps. ii. 8, lxxii. 8; Isa. ix. 7, etc. Such a rule of the world could belong only to the Son of God, He only could be made heir of all things. As Son-heir He fulfils the idea of the Messianic King. In another sense, indeed, man is destined to be over the work of God's hands, and how this rule is subordinated to the other hardly appears. This rule, too, the Son realizes in Himself, ii. 9, and enables men to attain to it.

The attaining to this is salvation. This is the kingdom that cannot be shaken which we receive, xii. 28; the Rest that remaineth for the People of God, iv. 9; the inheritance promised of old and reached through the new covenant, ix. 15. To initiate this covenant, ix. 15, viii. 6; to guarantee it to us, vii. 22; to save to the uttermost those under it through intercession, vii. 25, required a high priest—such a high priest as only the Son could be. None but He, possessed of an indissoluble life, could minister the offering of Himself. None but He could bring His offering into the true heavenly sanctuary, where God is in truth, and obtain eternal redemption, ix. 12, sanctifying the People for ever, x. 10. None but He could enter the true holy place as our representative and appear before the face of God for us, ix. 24. Again, under the somewhat figurative form of actions done in heavenly places, that sphere of God's true abode and world of truth, the Epistle expresses the absolute worth and eternal validity of the Son's redemptive acts.

## SECOND SECTION.—CHAPTER III. 1–IV. 13.

### JESUS AND MOSES.

**Jesus, head of the new covenant house of God, has more glory than Moses, head of the house of God under the first covenant; for He is Son over the house of God, while Moses was but a servant within it. They who hold fast their faith in Him enter into the Rest of God, of which Israel under Moses fell short.**

**Connection.**—The connection is with the general contents of the two preceding chapters, though immediately with the words, chap. ii. 18, *able to succour*, etc. Jesus had already been spoken of as Messenger of God's final revelation, i. 1, ii. 3; and also as Author of salvation and High Priest, ii. 3, 9, 10, 14, 17; and these two main lines are united together in iii. 1, "Apostle and High Priest of our confession." This union of all the offices of a mediator had been seen also in Moses, and the comparison of Jesus with Moses was already before the Apostle's mind when he used the word "faithful," ii. 17 (comp. iii. 2, 5). Further, a well-known Scripture, Ps. xcv., looked forward to the new covenant people of God, and warned them against forfeiting the Rest of God as Israel did by their disobedience under their mediator Moses. The situation of the "Hebrews" addressed was precisely similar to that of Israel in the wilderness. Israel had just been sanctified or set apart to God by sacrifice and redemption (comp. ii. 11). It had just heard the word spoken by Angels, the Law (ii. 2). It had just set out to go forward to the rest appointed for it. It was the house of God, under the guidance of Moses, faithful in all the house. The situation of the "Hebrews" agrees in all this. And with this background (suggested to him by Ps. xcv.) giving relief to all he says, the Apostle brings forward—*first*, his exhortation to consider Jesus, like to Moses, but greater, vers. 1–6; and *second*, his warnings founded on the example of Israel and their fate, ver. 7–iv. 13.

**Outline.** — 1. Exhortation to consider Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, like Moses in faithfulness, but greater than he in the sphere of His mediatorship, inasmuch as He has been thought worthy of the glory of being over the house of God as Son, while the honour of Moses was no more than that of a servant within it, iii. 1–6.

2. Warning to the "Hebrews" against unbelief, in words of the Holy Ghost, Ps. xcv., To-day if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as (they of Israel did) in the provocation . . . in the wilderness, iii. 7–11. These words are words of the Spirit of prophecy directly addressed to the people of God when the new covenant is set before them. "To-day" is the time of the new covenant; the

III. 1 WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, 2 Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as

"voice" of God "heard" is His voice speaking to us in His Son (i. 1, ii. 1).—These words of the Holy Spirit the Apostle then makes the text of two homilies in his own words, one founded especially on the words, *Harden not your hearts*, etc., iii. 12–19; and the other more on the words, *To-day if ye shall hear his voice*, iv. 1–13.

Vers. 1–6. **Jesus, Son over the house of God; Moses, servant within it.** The verses are a little intricate from the real point of contrast between Moses and Christ (which is the basis of "consider") being kept back till the very end (ver. 6). (1) Vers. 1, 2, Contemplate Jesus, faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also was Moses. Moses and Jesus agree in faithfulness; the point of superiority of the latter does not lie here, but in the appointment or sphere within which He is faithful. This is not yet stated. (2) Vers. 3, 4. Neither is the sphere yet stated in these verses, but it is described, and said to be one more glorious than that of Moses in proportion as the builder of the house has more honour than the house. Jesus is builder of the house, and the glory of His sphere of faithfulness corresponds. (3) Vers. 5, 6. At last the point of contrast is reached; it is this: Moses was faithful *in* all God's house as a *servant*, but Christ is faithful as a *Son over* God's house—whose house are we. The house spoken of is everywhere regarded as the house of God, and nowhere as that of Moses or of Christ.

Vers. 1, 2. *Wherefore . . . the heavenly calling;* rather, **a heavenly . . .**—*Consider . . . profession, Christ Jesus;* rather, **confession,** even **Jesus.** So the best MSS., omitting *Christ.*—*Who was faithful;* rather, **who is, . . .** Wick. *which is trew;* Cran. *how that he is faithful.* The reference is so mainly, as in all the Epistle, to Christ as He is in His heavenly condition, that this must rule the translation: compare "appointed" and "hath been thought worthy."

"Wherefore" connects generally with chaps. i.–ii., where Christ is Apostle (i. 1–3) and High Priest (ii. 9, etc.), though immediately with "faithful" (ii. 17) and the closing words of chap. ii. The Author had in view this comparison with Moses, and prepared the way for it by using "faithful" in ii. 17.—The Author had called believers "sanctified" and "sons" (ii. 11–13); recalling this and realizing what it implied, He addresses the Hebrews as "holy brethren." Further He had set before them what the great salvation was to which they were destined (ii. 3), and to which the Captain of their salvation had attained, even lordship over all things in the world to come (ii. 5, etc.); and as called to this heavenly world and already tasting its powers (vi. 5, ii. 4), He addresses them as partakers of "a heavenly calling," that is, sharing in a call to the possession of the heavenly world to come. In the word "heavenly" there is struck for the first time, in words at least, an

3 also Moses *was faithful* in all his house. For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the

antithesis of great importance in the Epistle, that of this world and heaven, in other words that of the merely material and transient and the ideal and abiding. The things of this world are material, unreal, transient; those of heaven are ideal, true, and eternal. Heaven is the world of realities, of things themselves (ix. 23), of which the things here are but "copies." There is the true Tabernacle (viii. 2); the city that hath the foundations (xi. 10); the heavenly Jerusalem and Mount Zion (xii. 22); the kingdom that cannot be shaken (xii. 27, 28); the true "country" which the patriarchs sought (xi. 16)—all the eternal real things of which the things of this world are but shadows (x. 1); and to these things we are called and are come, for this heavenly world projects itself into this present life like headlands of a new world into the ocean. This world of realities has been revealed, for Christ, who belongs to it, has come from it, and has opened up the way to it by entering it through death as our Forerunner (vi. 20) and High Priest (x. 19). This real world is the abode of God, where He is as He is in Himself. It is that which He has destined to be put in subjection to man as His final possession (ii. 5–8). Being true and consisting of things themselves, it cannot be shaken, but remains after the great convulsions under which things that are made pass away (xii. 27).—Then it may be called earth or heaven, for earth and heaven coincide.

Bengel says:—As Apostle, Jesus pleads the cause of God with us; as High Priest, He pleads our cause with God. True; but it is God that has appointed Him to be High Priest (v. 4), and it is to Him that He is faithful, not to us (ii. 17, iii. 2), for faithfulness to Him is compassion to us (ii. 17, v. 1, 2).—"Our confession" is not: whom we confess; nor yet quite: who is the substance or contents of our confession; but: who holds the place of Apostle and High Priest in our confession—where *our* is emphatic in opposition to the confession of Israel in which Moses held the same place. Christ is not regarded in this Epistle as He is in the Pauline Epistles as the direct object of faith; this is the promises or in general the word of God; see on xi. 1. —The words, *as also Moses*, etc., are virtually a quotation from Num. xii. 7: My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house. Jesus does not come behind Moses in faithfulness, and with Hebrews to say this was to say much. It is the appointment or sphere in which He is faithful that raises Him above Moses. This is not yet named.

Ver. 3. *For this man was counted . . .*; rather, **for he hath been thought worthy of more glory** than Moses—which, of course, means He has been exalted to it. The tense as well as the word "glory" (ii. 9) implies that the glory is that of Christ's present place in salvation, over the house of God, the "glory" being not any general glory lying outside His appointed sphere, but just that appointed sphere itself. *For*

4 house. For every house is builded by some *man;* but he
5 that built all things *is* God. And Moses verily *was* faithful
in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things
6 which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his

supports "consider," or if it expand "appointed" (Gr. *made;* comp. 1 Sam. xii. 6) the meaning is the same. The direct naming of this glorious sphere is postponed till ver. 6; it is described, however, as a glory greater than that of Moses in proportion as the builder of the house has more honour than the house. Jesus is Builder of the house, Moses is the house, *i.e.* he is on a level with it, being part of it, as a servant within it (ver. 5). This kind of comparison by stating a proportion is common in the Epistle; the comparison, however, is never a mere ratio: the point of comparison lies within, not outside the things compared. Thus i. 4: Jesus has become by so much better than the Angels as He has the more excellent name of Son—which He has (comp. vii. 20–22, viii. 6). So here, He has been counted worthy of more glory . . . inasmuch as the Builder of the house—which He is—has more honour, etc. The glory corresponds to what He is; as Builder He is *over* the house (ver. 6), just as having made the worlds He has been appointed heir of them (i. 2).

Ver. 4. *Every house . . . by some man;* rather, by some one. This verse is a necessary link bringing back the thought from Jesus being Builder of the house to His relation to God who appointed Him (ver. 2), and preparing for the statement at last of what His position is in respect to the house of God. The first half of the verse leans on ver. 3, taking up "He who hath built the house"—I say, built the house, for every house is builded by some one, and this one by Jesus; and the second half prepares for ver. 5—but though He built the house it was under God, for God is He who built all things. Just as God by Him made the worlds, so by Him He built His house; and just as He made Him heir of the worlds which through Him He had made, so He set Him over the house which He had built by Him.

Vers. 5, 6. Now at last the point of comparison between Moses and Christ is reached, which is this: And Moses, indeed, was faithful in all His house as a servant . . . but Christ (is faithful) as a Son over his house—*i.e.* God's house, not as English Version, *his own house.* —The contrast is the same as that between Christ and the Angels: Christ is Son, Heir of the world to come, the Angels are ministering spirits in the sphere of salvation; Christ is Son, over the house of God, Moses was a servant within it. Christ is Heir of the worlds as Son, the dignity is conformable to the relation; so He is over the house as Son; and in both cases, because He was God's agent in making that over which He has been appointed head.—The point of agreement between Moses and Christ is faithfulness; the points of contrast are two: Moses was faithful as a *servant*, and as servant implies *within* the house; Christ is faithful as a *Son*, and the son

own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

must be *over* the house. The glory or honour of each is not something distinct from their respective positions, but just these respective positions themselves. Though a servant, Moses' trust extended to *all* God's house. He was not only Apostle to Israel, but in the beginning also high priest. He initiated the covenant by sacrifice, and consecrated the Book and all the people (ix. 19; comp. Ex. xxiv. 8), and only later did he devolve this part of the service upon his brother Aaron (Ex. xxviii. 1), just as later upon the advice of Jethro he devolved some of his judicial functions upon the elders (Ex. xviii. 17). But even when divesting himself in person of much and laying it upon others, the whole direction of everything in the house remained in his hand. Yet in all this he was purely a servant. He subscribed everything which he said or ordered: *as the Lord commanded Moses* (Ex. vii. 6, xvi. 16, xxxiv. 4, etc.). He was a servant *for a testimony*, *i.e.* to bear testimony, *of those things which were to be spoken*, *i.e.* from time to time revealed (i. 1). He received from God, and what he received he testified or declared to the people; he initiated nothing of himself and assumed no authority over the house, but moved wholly within it, equally obedient with all other members of it.—Christ is faithful as a Son over the house of God. Faithfulness receives a complexion from the person and the sphere. The faithfulness of a Son has elements in it which that of a servant wants; and the faithfulness of one over the house has a personal and lofty energy and solicitude which do not belong to that of one himself under authority. This is what the Hebrews are exhorted to consider, even Jesus, Son over the house of God, and faithful to Him who so appointed Him, that they may hold fast their confidence firm unto the end (ver. 6).

*Whose house are we . . . i.e.* God's house are we, believers through Christ. It is everywhere the idea in the Epistle that the Christian faith is the true and final covenant between God and man, or the absolute and perfect religion (iv. 3, x. 26). The condition of forming this true house of God, however, is continued faith, *if we hold fast the confidence;* or, **our joyful confidence** (iv. 16, boldly). The word means *free speech*, then that condition of mind out of which such freedom springs, and then, generally, confidence (2 Cor. vii. 4; Acts ii. 29, iv. 13; Eph. iii. 12). It describes that glad confidence which the sacrifice of the Son and the Christian facts inspire. It is a state of mind which shows itself either in reference to the present or the future. In the present it is the confident state of mind with which the believer, depending on the offering of the Son, approaches the throne of grace (iv. 16), and enters the holiest (x. 19). In reference to the future, the world to come, it is the joyful confidence which springs from, or is a complexion of, faith and hope (iii. 6, x. 35). When it attains a high intensity it becomes a *glorying*, as here.—*Rejoicing of the hope . . . end;* or, **glorying of our hope.** The words

probably mean the thing hoped for, which is matter of glorying to us, but everywhere throughout the Epistle the external object which causes the glorying or confidence is apt to be confused with the mental state caused by it (see on vi. 18, etc.), and the word "hold fast" is used of both.—The *end* is not the end of life, but the moment when hope becomes reality with the coming again of the Son (see on i. 1; comp. x. 37).[1]

The above passage has always been felt to be difficult. Throughout the passage, "house" seems always God's house, not that of Moses, *i.e.* entrusted to him (ver. 2), nor yet that of Christ; comp. x. 21. The word "house," though the idea of an actual building seems to float sometimes before the Writer's mind, embraces all that is expressed by "household," servants and all other appointments. Hence Moses is part of the house; and "build" means prepare, or establish (ix. 6). There is but one house of God, that in which Moses was servant, and over which Christ is as Son. Yet it is equally certain that the house had two forms—that within which Moses was, and that over which Christ is. The latter is the true house of God (ver. 6). When, therefore, Christ is called Builder of the house, under God, this perhaps ought not to be pressed so far as to say that He built the house in that form of it in which Moses was servant, nor that He was over this. The Author had scarcely such an idea. There is one house of God. At one time and in one form of it, Moses was *in* it as a servant; at another time and in the perfect form of it, Christ is *over* it as a Son; and of the house in this form He is the Builder, although the house is builded in truth by God over all, who built all things, and is His house.

The glory of Christ and the honour of Moses are simply those of their respective places in and over the house. The honour of Moses, though but a servant, was great, greater than that put upon any until Christ (Deut. xxxiv. 10). He spoke with God mouth to mouth (Num. xii. 8). He entered into the near presence of God in the cloud, and the divine glory was reflected upon his face, and beheld by the people (Ex. xxxiv. 30). He ministered to the Church in the ten words higher thoughts of God and man than had ever yet been expressed. The true heavenly things were showed him in the mount (Ex. xxv. 40; Heb. viii. 5); and he drew an outline of all that the house of God should be, and sketched in forms of this world (ix. 1) all its arrangements and expressed its perfect idea (Ex. xix. 6). The wave of suffering that at its height broke upon Christ went over him (xi. 25, 26). And at last he stood on the mount of transfiguration, and gave over his work as servant into the hand of the Son, less than He, but not unworthy to share and be lighted up in His glory, and brought out of the past in full individuality with an imperishable name. But all this honour was but a reflection thrown upon him from the glory of another. His approach to God was but a temporary nearness and no sight of His face (Ex. xxxiii. 23), while Christ

[1] The words "firm unto the end," though omitted in some good MSS., have upon the whole the weight of testimony in their favour; comp. ver. 14.

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear
8 his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in
9 the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers
tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

entered in before His face (ix. 24, x. 12). The glory that shone on him was but a passing radiance, fading away both from him and from the whole Old Testament ministry (2 Cor. iii. 8, etc.), and dying down as the sunlight at last from the peak that excels all others in loftiness; but the glory of God is an abiding light in the face of the Son, who is over the house of God (2 Cor. iv. 6).[1]

Ver. 7–iv. 13. **Exhortation and warning to the "Hebrews" founded on the example of Israel—*first*, in words of the Holy Ghost, from Ps. xcv. 7–11; and *second*, in the form of application by the Author himself, ver. 12–iv. 13.**

*Wherefore* connects with the immediately preceding words: *whose house are we, if we hold fast . . . wherefore.—Wherefore (as . . . if ye will hear . . .)*; rather, **wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye shall hear . . .** (Tynd. Genev.). The parenthesis, which is not in the primary edition of the Authorized Version, seems unnecessary; the Apostle, though quoting the words of the Holy Ghost as a text on which he is to enlarge, seems to make them his own, and the "wherefore" loses itself in the exhortation, and is scarcely to be connected with ver. 12.—The words do not permit the sense, *if ye will hear*, *i.e.* consent to hear; they mean, *if ye hear* (or, shall have heard), the whole point lying in the fact of "hearing" and its responsibilities (ver. 16).—*Provocation* and *temptation* are translations of the Hebrew *Meribah* and *Massah*, proper names in the Psalm, though having this meaning.—*Day of Massah*, comp. Isa. ix. 4. On the incidents that gave names to these places see Ex. xvii. 1–7; Num. xx. 1–3; Deut. xxxiii. 8.—Ver. 9. *When;* or, **where** (Tynd. Gen.).—Ver. 11. *So I sware;* **or, as I sware.**

The passage quoted is Ps. xcv. 7–11. In this passage (1) it is assumed that God will be heard speaking—To-day if ye hear (or, when ye hear) His voice; and (2) a warning is uttered against hardening of the heart, as Israel did, when this voice of God is heard. Some details of Israel's unbelief are added, and the fatal consequences of it referred to—As I sware they shall not enter into my Rest. What the Divine voice *says* is not given in the passage, but it is understood that when God speaks it will be some redemptive promise that He utters; and what this promise is, is suggested by the words said of Israel, They shall not enter into my Rest. The word "To-day" also, which is put in opposition to the "day of the temptation in the wilderness," implies the presence of a new epoch in the history of redemption. So that the passage suggests both a new

[1] This last reference, however, is scarcely in the sense of the Epistle. In it the Son is the brightness of God's glory in His pre-existing state; in the above passage from St. Paul, "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" is said of the Son as exalted.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They
do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my
11 ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my

historical epoch and a new revelation—an epoch and revelation parallel at least in importance to the epoch of the Exodus and the promise of God's Rest then set before Israel. This epoch, To-day, is the period when the new covenant is set before men; and this "voice" of God which we "hear," is His voice of revelation speaking through the Son (i. 1, ii. 1–3), for the history of redemption knows but of two great turning-points, that of the first covenant and that of the new. This is the view taken of the Psalm by the Apostle. It is not to his mind an exhortation of the Holy Ghost to the Old Testament Israel, which may be *applied* or accommodated to Christians; it is no doubt an exhortation to Israel (for this Apostle is still addressing Israel), but it is an exhortation to Israel conceived as face to face with the new covenant, and as having arrived at this epoch in the history of redemption.

The Psalm is probably a late one. It is one of a cycle, Ps. xcii.–c. This cycle belongs to the period of Israel's renaissance, at the close of the exile, the same period into which Isa. xl.–lxvi. is thrown, whether the author of the prophecy actually lived within it or no. This period was one of hope. Israel was awakening out of the stupor in which it had lain for near a century. Aspirations that had seemed extinguished, and thoughts of a destiny that had begun to be despaired of, again filled the people's mind—Israel was yet to be the light of the Gentiles (Isa. xlii. 6). The very air was filled with voices calling the people to its new destiny, for the nation's hopes at this epoch were less connected with a person or anointed king, than filled out with the idea of itself in God's purpose, as having within it an undying holy seed (Isa. vi. 13) that would blossom out into perfect flower. The prophet's ears were filled with voices that answered one another, crying, The word of the Lord shall stand; His glory shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together (Isa. xl. 5). The Psalms of this time begin their song of triumph as with the voice of a trumpet, The Lord is King (Ps. xciii., xcvii., xcix., etc.). It is amidst these hopes that this Psalm originates, and to these that it refers. It is the voice of God calling Israel to this new destiny of which it speaks. Such hopes rose on the ruins of the first covenant, which had been virtually broken in the exile. Hence Jeremiah prophesied of a new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 33; Heb. viii. 7), and Isaiah speaks of the Servant of the Lord being made a covenant of the people (Isa. xlix. 8). Now these hopes were the hopes that have been realized in Christianity. This revelation of God's glory was made in His Son (Ps. cii. 16; Heb. i. 10, etc.). This reign of the Lord is through Him. What the authors of these Psalms and Isaiah felt themselves standing before was this new epoch in the history of the church, which is the Christian dispensation. They thought themselves close upon it, for to both Old and New Testament

12 rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

saints the salvation has always seemed ready to be revealed (1 Pet. i. 5; Joel ii. 1; Isa. xiii. 6; Heb. x. 37). It was delayed for centuries, but this did not alter the nature or the sum of the hopes themselves. —More on the Author's use of the Psalm seems unnecessary. Between the Septuagint translation, which he mainly follows, and the Hebrew, there are considerable differences, but these differences do not touch the two great points in the Psalm of which he lays hold, the new epoch in redemption and the new revelation or voice of God which is heard. The Author himself, on different occasions, construes the words of the Psalm differently; comp. vers. 9, 10 with ver. 17.[1]

Chap. iii. 12–iv. 13. Application by the Author himself of the words just quoted, in two main parts,—*first*, a warning based on the words, *harden not your heart*, sharpened by the example of Israel, iii. 12–19; and *second*, one founded more on the positive side of the quotation, *to-day if ye shall hear his voice*, iv. 1–13.

Chap. iii. 12–19. **Outline.**—1. Warning to beware of unbelief and falling away from the living God, brought nigh in the faith of Christ, ver. 12. 2. Advice to guard against this by mutual exhortations, while To-day lasts, ver. 13 (x. 24, etc.). 3. This warning supported by the reflection that only if we hold fast our faith are we become partakers of Christ, vers. 14, 15. 4. All this is impressed by a series of sharp interrogations setting vividly before the mind the fatal line of steps that led to Israel's exclusion from God's rest—when they heard they provoked (16); God was wroth (17); He sware in His wrath they should not enter (18): and thus they were unable to enter because of unbelief (19), vers. 16–19.

Ver. 12. *An evil heart of unbelief* is almost, an evil unbelieving heart. The evil and the unbelief are hardly regarded as cause and

[1] On general considerations the exile is the probable historical position of the Psalm. The Author refers to it by saying, In David (iv. 7). It is called David's in the Septuagint, though not in the Hebrew. "In David" may be merely a mode of citing the Psalter. In any case this is a mere critical question, which has no bearing on the propriety of the use made of the Psalm. At whatever time it was spoken it was at least after the people entered Canaan (iv. 7, 8); it could not therefore refer to the rest of Canaan, for all that was to come of that had been taken possession of. But it utters a warning against hardening the heart, which implies an offer of something new, and it says, To-day, which implies a new era in redemption.—How little historical weight is due to the headings of the Psalms may be inferred from the discordant inscriptions of the Hebrew and Septuagint in this case; and how natural it is to say "David," when nothing more is meant than the author of the Psalm, whoever he was, appears from the curious fact that even our English Bibles have considerably enlarged the tradition of Davidic authorship; for in the summaries prefixed to the Psalms, four Psalms (xlii., lxvi., cxx., cxxxii.) are assigned to David which are ascribed to him neither by the Hebrew nor Septuagint.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest
any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the begin-
15 ning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; while it is
said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts,

effect, although this in fact may be often the case.—*In departing;* rather, **in falling away**, *i.e.* apostatizing. This is another way of describing unbelief, at least in its culminating act.—*The living God* seems specially to describe God as He is in Himself and revealed in Christ. Hence believers are come to the city of the living God, where He is in His fulness, xii. 22; their consciences being purified from dead works, they are able to serve the living God, ix. 14: hence also when Christians fall away from the faith of Christ, they apostatize from the living God, iii. 12; and when wrath overtakes them for this, they fall into the hands of the living God, x. 31—God whom they once fully knew. God is life, and in the Son He has been manifested as He is, all active in putting Himself forth to men, and all responsive to their putting of themselves forth to Him. His manifestation of Himself now is not in that unreal, mediate, material manner under the first covenant, in which He was not Himself to men.

Ver. 13. *While it is called to-day* might also mean, *while* (the) *to-day is proclaimed.* "To-day" hardly means itself a period of time, but there is a period within which at any time "to-day" may be said. This period is that during which we "hear;" it is the period fixed by God anew for entering into His rest (iv. 7), the period till Christ shall come again. The *sin* here mentioned is the sin of unbelief (ver. 17, x. 26, xii. 1). Its "deceitfulness" may refer to the alluring character which it has as connected with national sentiment (xiii. 13); with old and imposing memories; or as it allies itself with the natural sluggishness of the mind and life (vi. 12), or the love of the world (x. 34); and to the insidious manner in which it moves on from step to step (x. 25), till it reaches a final "hardening" (iii. 8).

Ver. 14. *Partakers of Christ* may also mean *partakers with Christ.* The word (fellows, i. 9) is chiefly used in reference to things (iii. 1, xii. 8, and the verb, ii. 14, v. 13, vii. 13), but in vi. 4 of the Holy Ghost. The idea of a mystical union with Christ is not prominent, if at all found, in the Epistle; he is the Captain, Forerunner, High Priest, Brother, but always distinct. With this understanding, however, partakers *of* (xiii. 10) is more probable than partakers *with* Christ (ii. 10).—*Beginning of our confidence* (confidence is "substance" in i. 3; comp. on xi. 1) is here simply opposed to end (see on ver. 6), and has no reference to any more splendid beginning than usual which the Hebrews had made, although their early faith had been in fact full of promise, x. 32.

Ver. 15 is most naturally connected with the preceding: if we hold fast . . . unto the end, while it is said . . . , *i.e.* not *during* the time

16 as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did
provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.
17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with
them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?
18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his
19 rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they
could not enter in because of unbelief.

that it is said, but in the presence and consciousness of the saying, Harden not, etc.—with this divine warning always in the ears. Thus taken, the verse does seem to drag a little, but the connection with the following has more difficulty on account of the *for* in ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *For some when . . . howbeit not all;* rather, **for who were they that when they heard did provoke? Nay, was it not all?** The verse like the following must be taken interrogatively. The sharp interrogations set the progressive downfall of Israel vividly before the Hebrews. Israel and they are alike in both having heard (ver. 7, iv. 2); Israel when they heard provoked; and the danger of falling into the same example (iv. 11) is seen from the fact that Israel's defection was universal, and that it happened when the memory of their deliverance from Egypt was fresh.[1]

Ver. 17. *But . . . grieved;* rather, **and . . . wroth.** The next step.

Ver. 18. *That believed not . . .*; rather, **obeyed not.** The third step.

Ver. 19. *So we see;* or, **and we see.** The words are not an inference, rather a statement in the historical chain, though expressing the last link of it. They form the transition to chap. iv., stating that Israel failed to enter in because of unbelief, and implying that the Rest of which they came short is still left. This last idea, with the accompanying exhortation not to come short of the Rest that is left, forms the substance of the following passage, chap. iv. 1–13.

Chap. iv. 1–13. The Rest of God through Israel's failure to enter it is still left open, and a promise has been made to us of entering it—let us therefore earnestly strive to enter into it, and beware of unbelief, which the word of God is quick to detect.

The passage is based on the words, "*To-day if ye shall hear his voice*," words which to the Apostle's mind imply that God is making to us in the Christian age a new offer of His Rest, and that the promise to enter into it is being fulfilled in Christians who have come to faith, and this idea is illustrated and exhortation built on it. The first part of the passage is intricate, and needs paraphrase.

**Outline.**—Seeing then a promise of entering into God's Rest is still left, let us fear lest any one of us should come short of it, ver. 1. A promise is left—for indeed we have had good tidings preached to us, as they also had; but the word of hearing did not profit them from their unbelief, ver. 2. They, though having the promise of the

[1] The difference between *some* and *who?* is a mere accent—*tinés* and *tínes*.

IV. 1 LET us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short

Rest, were excluded by their unbelief; we have the promise like them, and in us, Christians, who have believed, the promise of the Rest is taking effect, ver. 3.

For: 1. God excluded them from His Rest in wrath, although the Rest existed in their day and they might have entered it. The Rest existed, for the works of God from which He rested were finished from the creation of the world, and He Himself had entered into the Rest, as appears from Gen. ii. 2, "*and God rested*," and from the words, "*my rest;*" and it was God's desire that men should share His Rest with Him, as appears both from the words, "*They shall not enter into my rest*," and from the circumstances in which they were said; for the oath in wrath excluding some, implies the general desire that men should enter into the Rest, and that the cause of exclusion lay in Israel itself, vers. 4, 5.

2. This then being the state of things—it being the purpose of God, an unchanging purpose, that some should enter into His Rest, and enjoy it along with Him, and Israel, to whom the promise was first made at the Exodus, having failed to enter, through disobedience, ver. 6, God proceeded to issue the promise anew and to fix a new time for entering in. This He did long after the Exodus, even long after the entry into Canaan, when He said in the words already quoted from Ps. xcv., "*To-day if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your heart*," ver. 7. These words, uttered long after the entry into Canaan, sufficiently show that Joshua had not given the people the Rest, ver. 8. And nothing since then can have realized the Rest, nothing till the new covenant, to which indeed the reference is in Ps. xcv.

3. There is therefore left open a Sabbath-rest for the people of God, a Sabbath-rest from their works, even as God's Rest is to Him, vers. 9, 10.

4. Let us strive, therefore, to enter into the Rest, guarding against unbelief, for the Word of God, which offers us this Rest and warns us against hardening ourselves (Ps. xcv.), is instinct with all the attributes of God Himself, living, active, and quick to judge the thoughts of the heart, and detect the secret movements of unbelief, vers. 11–13.

Ver. 1. The object of the passage generally is not to show that Israel was excluded for their unbelief,—this was sufficiently shown in chap. iii. 12–19, and is the assumption underlying the passage (vers. 2, 6, 11),—but to show that Israel having been excluded (iii. 19), the Rest is still left (iv. 1, 9), and to *identify* this Rest referred to in Ps. xcv.

2 of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being

with the Christian salvation (vers. 6-8), and then to exhort the "Hebrews" not to come short of it as Israel did in their day (vers. 1, 11, etc.). The Rest is God's Rest, into which He Himself entered at the creation (Gen. ii. 2, in ver. 5); this Rest was set before Israel, but for their unbelief God sware in wrath that they should not enter it; this exclusion of them applied only to them as the words *in wrath* indicate, and did not invalidate the general purpose of God that men should enter into His Rest—a purpose implied in the words, enter into "my" Rest. Therefore He renewed the promise and defined a new time for entering. This new promise is His revelation through the Son, and this new time is the Christian age, and the Rest is the Christian salvation.

*A promise being left, i.e.* still remaining, of entering into His Rest. This is put here by way of assertion, though iii. 19 might have implied it, and is the theme illustrated in the passage, first from the fact of Israel's exclusion (vers. 1–6), and second from the actual terms of Ps. xcv. 7, etc.—*Any of you . . . come short*, lit. **any one of you** should seem **to have come short**—the same particularity as in iii. 12, 13; comp. xii. 15, 16. To "come short" is to fail to reach. The word "seem" might be a refinement of language, making the tone milder, just as the Author uniting himself with his readers says, *let us fear*. The moral tone of the Author, however, is stringent, and "seem" may mean **appear** or **be found**, when the result comes forth at the end; and this suits *to have come short*.[1]

Ver. 2. *For unto us . . . unto them;* rather, **for indeed we have had good tidings preached to us, even as also they had.** The verse supports the assertion of ver. 1, *a promise being left*, and by supporting the assertion supports also the exhortation of ver. 1.—I say a promise being left, for indeed, etc.; the emphasis is not on *we*, but on the fact of good tidings having been preached. The good tidings refer to the revelation of the great salvation by the Son (ii. 3, i. 1).—*But the word preached*, lit. the word of hearing, *i.e.* heard from God (iii. 7, 15, 16; comp. ii. 1). Throughout the passage the important word is *hear*.—The second clause is more a historical statement indicating that Israel in fact had no advantage from their "hearing," though it also states the reason of this. The translation *mixed with faith in them* is the most natural, though the words might mean *mixed by faith with them*. In the latter case faith is the means through which the word of hearing becomes mixed with or assimilated to the hearer; in the former,

[1] Of course the words cannot mean, lest any one should even *seem* to have come short. The term might mean *imagine* he has come short or too late for the Rest. But this agrees ill with *let us fear;* and though the particular religious condition of the Hebrews is not quite easy to determine, such an illusion that the Rest being forfeited in the wilderness was no more open, is improbable. And to say, let us fear lest any one harbour this delusion, is unnatural. The Author's purpose in the passage is not strictly to prove in general that a Rest remains, but to *identify* the Rest that remains with the Christian salvation.

3 mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest: although the

faith is that condition of the hearer's mind which absorbs the word into itself. This gives more prominence to faith and is more suitable to the general scope of the passage, in which faith and its opposite, unbelief, as the response to hearing, play so large a part.—Tholuck quotes a homely illustration from Hedinger's New Test. (1704):—Food if it is to nourish must go into the blood, and lay itself upon the body. And if the word is to profit it must be transformed through faith, like the juice of food, into the spirit, mind, and will of the man, that the whole man may become as the word is and requires, that is, holy, righteous, pure, and good. Hearing alone profits as little as an undigested food in a bad stomach.[1]

Ver. 3. *For we who . . . into rest;* rather, lit. for we do enter into the rest, (we) who believe (or, have believed). The connection here is exceedingly difficult to seize. The verse seems to take up both members of the preceding verse, that about "us" and that about Israel. It is not a mere statement of a principle, viz. that entrance is into God's Rest by faith (end of ver. 2), but in addition a historical statement, viz. that we Christians who have believed do enter into the Rest, the promise of the Rest applies to us, is taking effect in us (first half of ver. 2). Twice already this statement had been made, ver. 1 and ver. 2, now it is again made, and becomes the historical proposition supported in the following verses in two steps: the first, vers. 3–5, laying the foundation, to the effect that there is a Rest of God, a Rest enjoyed by God since the creation (proved from the words in Gen. ii. 2, *God rested*, and the words *my rest*), into which it was His general desire that men should enter, and His particular desire that Israel should enter (proved by the circumstances and the terms of Israel's exclusion, He sware *in wrath*, and they shall not enter *into my rest*). The second step, vers. 6–9, after recapitulating the results gained in the first step, viz. that it was God's gracious desire that men should enter with Him into His Rest, and that Israel to whom the good tidings were formerly preached failed (ver. 6), shows that the Rest left unoccupied through Israel's exclusion has been promised anew, and the new promise is identical with the Christian revelation.

[1] There is proof that the true text of this verse became at an early period uncertain. There is high ancient authority for a form of the word *mixed* which requires the rendering:—The word of hearing did not profit them *because they were not mixed* (united) *by faith with them* that heard. Such a reading can hardly be original here—for (1) the reasoning, to be applicable to the Christian "Hebrews," requires that those who wanted faith and those who heard should be the same persons; and (2) it has been already assumed by the Author that *all* who heard provoked by their unbelief (iii. 16), the fact that there may have been believing individuals, like Caleb and Joshua, being disregarded; and it is in the highest degree improbable that a different view of the history should appear here from that in iii. 16. There is also very ancient testimony for *it* was not mixed, as in Eng. Version. Upon the whole it is perhaps probable that no extant text exhibits the original reading of the verse.

4 works were finished from the foundation of the world. For
he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise,
5 And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And
6 in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing
therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they
to whom it was first preached entered not in because of
7 unbelief: again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David,
To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will
8 hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had
given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of

*Though the works were finished*, the words explain the preceding *my rest*. The Rest is God's Rest, into which He entered on finishing the works of creation; it existed and was open for men since then, and lay before Israel to enter.

Vers. 4, 5. The preceding idea that God's Rest existed is proved by the words in Gen. ii. 2, *and God rested*, and by the words in the Psalm excluding Israel, "they shall not enter into *my rest*." And the exclusion of Israel by the *oath in wrath* indicated that their exclusion was for special reasons, and that it was God's general desire that men should share His Rest. The words, *if they shall enter* (vers. 3, 5), should be, **they shall not enter** (as iii. 11, where the words are the same). The phrase is moulded upon the form of the *negative* oath in Hebrew, 2 Sam. iii. 35.

Second step, vers. 6–9 (see outline, and on ver. 3).—Ver. 6 recapitulates the results of vers. 3–5. The two main facts were, first, it is God's design that men should share His Rest, *it remaineth that some must enter*, rather, **that some should** (or, shall) **enter**—this is manifest among other things from the cause and terms of Israel's exclusion; and second, that Israel was excluded—*they to whom it was first preached;* or, **they who had the glad tidings before preached to them** (ver. 2), viz. Israel of the Exodus.—*Because of unbelief;* rather, **disobedience**.—This being the state of things:—

Ver. 7. *Again he limiteth a certain day* . . . Perhaps the most natural way to take the whole verse is this: **He again fixeth a certain day, saying in David after so long a time, To-day, as has been said before, To-day if ye shall hear His voice, Harden not your hearts.** The words *as has been said before* refer to the Author's own previous citation of the passage, iii. 7, etc. The *so long time* is the interval between the Exodus and the date of Ps. xcv. These words make it not improbable that the Author followed the Septuagint and referred the Psalm to David. At all events, the Psalm fixing a new day for entering into the Rest was written long after Israel had entered Canaan; it could not refer to the Rest of Canaan, for all that Canaan had to give had been taken possession of.

Ver. 8. *For if Jesus;* better, **Joshua**. So Tynd. Gen. *Josue*. The word Joshua has probably the same meaning as Jesus, and occurs in later books in the form Jeshua, Neh. viii. 17. The Greek for both names is the same. The verse is not independent, but subordinate to

9 another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people
10 of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath

ver. 7, merely drawing attention to the fact that possession of Canaan was not the Rest of God.

Ver. 9. Conclusion from the two steps vers. 3–5 and vers. 6–8.—*There remaineth a rest;* rather, a Sabbath-rest, lit. a Sabbath keeping, a different word from *rest* used before. The Rest of the people of God is like the keeping of a Sabbath. This idea was suggested by God's resting on the seventh day (ver. 4). The comparison was not unfamiliar to Jewish theology: "The Israelites said, O Lord of the whole world, show us a type of the world to come. God answered them, That type is the Sabbath." And of Ps. xcii. it is said, "A Psalm for the Sabbath day—because it refers to the world to come, which is all Sabbath, and a rest unto eternal life."[1]—This Rest is left for the *people* of *God*. The Epistle adheres to the Old Testament idea that believers form a People, and that Christ sanctified the people with His blood (xiii. 12). This people is the same that formed the church of the Old Testament, viz. Israel. It is, however, Israel as believing, for within the camp of unbelieving Israel there is no sacrificial fellowship with God (xiii. 10). This people being the same with Old Testament Israel of course includes all Old Testament believers (ix. 15, xi. 40). The Author has not touched on the relations of Gentiles to the covenant (see Note on the Covenants). Israel as the people of God fell short of the Rest at the Exodus; they shall as the people of God, with all that cleave to them (Isa. xiv. 1), enter the true Rest and Sabbath keeping. It was a point with the Author to identify Christian Hebrews with the "people of God."

Ver. 10 develops the idea of Sabbath-rest in ver. 9, and justifies the use of the term.—*For he that . . . his rest*, i.e. God's Rest, and *he that* is equivalent to *whosoever*, or they that. The idea that *he* here has a special reference, viz. *Jesus*, seems without any support, either here or elsewhere. They that enter into God's Rest cease from their works as He did from His. The "works" from which man rests are all the works appointed to him here of God, not merely pains and toils, but the great sum of the task which he is set to accomplish, the result of which he shall carry with him into the Rest of God. What that may be even in individuals, we cannot know, for who can estimate the fruit of any life? and much less can we surmise what the accumulated gains garnered by mankind shall be.—"When looking deep into Eternity we become blinded by the overpowering glory, and return to the thought that such Sabbath-rest is not to be conceived as without work and activity, we are so far right, for God's Rest is at the same time an eternal life of infinite activity; but we must be on our guard that our weakness do not mix up what is earthly with the heavenly, or open up, even in the city of God itself, a new long-extended street-view of 'eternal perfectionating.' Rather must we strive with all the power of our spirit to realize the feeling of

[1] Rabbinical passages quoted in the Commentaries.

11 ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us
labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after
12 the same example of unbelief. For the word of God *is*
quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and

the true Rest, the perfected contentment and satisfaction, which in God has attained to all, and which has to reach nothing more in eternity" (Stier).

Vers. 11–13. Exhortation to strive to enter into the Rest.—*Let us labour*, or, **earnestly strive**, comp. vi. 11.—*After* the same example, or, may be, *into*.

Vers. 12, 13. The exhortation impressed by reference to the Word of God, which offers the Rest and warns us against hardening our hearts. The "Word" of God is personified here, and endowed with all the attributes of God Himself, with whom it is identified, ver. 13. The identification, however, is with God, not with the Son, for there is no trace of the personal Word or Logos here.

*Quick*, *i.e.* **living**, as in the phrases, the quick and the dead, to cut to the quick, etc. As God is the living God, His word is instinct with His life. It is not separate from Him, but filled out with all His attributes. It remains so, however long it has been spoken, never becoming cold or dead.—*And powerful;* rather, **active**, working; comp. Eph. i. 11; Phil. ii. 13; Isa. lv. 11. Life is measured by activity; full life is perfect activity.—*Sharper . . . sword*, a frequent comparison in Scripture; comp. Eph. vi. 17; Rev. i. 16, ii. 12, xix. 15; Isa. xlix. 2; Hos. vi. 5. The two-edged sword, that is, with no back, is naturally thinner and sharper than the ordinary one.—*Piercing . . . joints and marrow;* most naturally thus: **piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and of spirit, both joints and marrow** (of them). This is how its activity and sharpness manifest themselves. The meaning seems to be that the word pierces *to the dividing of*, *i.e.* so as to divide, both the soul and the spirit, to dissect or cut each of them open or asunder, and this not only in a superficial way, but in their innermost articulations and hidden heart—both joints and marrow of them. The idea of dividing the soul and spirit suggests the division of a body into its members, hence joints and marrow are attributed to them, expressing the subtle articulations of the spiritual being and the innermost nature and substance of it.

The meaning is scarcely that the Word of God pierces even to divide between the soul and spirit, to effect a separation between them—a delicate operation, no doubt, but one which this two-edged weapon is keen enough to accomplish. Such an interpretation would give too great an independence to "soul" and "spirit" as distinct from one another; the expression is a mere rhetorical accumulation of terms to express the whole mental nature of man on all its sides. This the Divine Word cuts open and lays bare (ver. 13), and exposes in its most secret movements and framework. If the Word of God

of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts
13 and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that
is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and
opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

had been here a regenerating Word, as it is a Word that analyzes and judges, we might have found a hint of the idea that the connection between the lower "soul" and higher "spirit" was one depraving to the latter, and that the Word of God came to divorce the union and rouse the spirit out of its voluptuous slumber in the lap of the sensuous soul. But such a conception of the soul and spirit has no points of support in the Epistle elsewhere, and is out of harmony with the scope of the passage.—*And is a discerner;* or, **is quick to judge**, or **discern.**—*Thoughts and intents* express in general the whole operations of the mind; comp. Ps. cxxxix. These words state literally what was already expressed through the preceding figures.

Ver. 13. *In his sight.* God being present in His Word as living, active, and judging the thoughts, a transition is made here from the Word to Himself.—*And opened*, i.e. *laid open.* The word means having the head thrown back and the neck laid bare; it is uncertain, however, to what the allusion is, whether to one overthrown by a wrestler, the meaning being *prone*, or to the practice of thrusting back the head of criminals to expose their face to the gaze of spectators. "Touched by this Word of God, every creature 'returns of force to its own likeness'—shows itself as it is" (Prof. Moulton).

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## NOTE ON THE REST OF GOD.

The Author's reasoning is based on two passages which he combines together,—Gen. ii. 2, *and God rested*, and Ps. xcv. 11, *they shall not enter into my Rest.* From the first, or from both, he infers that there is a Rest of God, which He Himself enjoys, and that He entered into it when the works of creation were finished (iv. 3, 10). It is manifest that this Rest of God is no rest yet future to Him, but one into which He then entered. The term Rest does not imply that He was wearied with His work of creation, but merely that He ceased from it; nor does it imply that since then He has been inactive or quiescent, but only that His work of creation being finished, He enjoyed a blessed satisfaction and sense of repose in it. It embodied His thoughts and purposes, and was a stage adapted for the display of all that He is, as well as an arena large enough and containing materials varied enough for the work which man was designed to work upon it.

From the other passage, *they shall not enter into my Rest*, the Author infers that it was the desire of God that men should enter into His Rest and share it with Him. The words were spoken of Israel in the wilderness with an oath in wrath. The wrath was

provoked by their unbelief (iii. 10, 16, 17, iv. 11) of what they "heard" from God (iii. 16, iv. 2), the "good tidings preached" to them (iv. 6), in other words the promise of entering into His Rest. When the Apostle says of God "my Rest," "His Rest," it is not his meaning that it was the purpose of God merely that men should enjoy a rest which should be to them what His Rest was to Him, but that God's design was that men should share His own Rest. For the work after accomplishing which man rests is not a work wrought apart from God, but through Him, and not out of connection with God's work from which He rested, but within it as a sphere; and there shall pass even over God's work simultaneously with the consummation of man's, a transfiguration through which the one work shall form a union with the other. Of necessity the same Rest will be different to men and to God. And even to God His Rest now, reposed in without the full fellowship of His people, may be in some way different from that Rest when His people shall share it with Him. This last reflection, however, was scarcely in the Author's mind.

The purpose that man should enter with Him into His Rest, God desired to see fulfilled in Israel. The Author's reasoning implies that if Israel had believed they would have entered in, the Rest would have been appropriated, and God's gracious design satisfied, and a Rest would have been no more "left" for others. Israel, however, came short through disobedience. But their unbelief could not make the faithfulness of God without effect (Rom. iii. 3). His gracious design that "some should enter in" (iv. 6) still remained, and long after He proceeded to give effect to it. He uttered the promise anew, and defined a new time for entering into the Rest when He said, *To-day if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts* (Ps. xcv. 7; chap. iv. 7). These words were said to the people of God long after they had entered Canaan. This fact and the tenour of the words, which imply a new revelation of God and a new intervention of His in redemptive history, of an importance equal at least to the great event of the Exodus, both show that the reference in the words is to something lying without the limits of the first covenant. This "voice" of God which is "heard" is His voice speaking to us in His Son (i. 1), and this "To-day" is "the end of these days," in which He has spoken to us in Him, on to the time when He shall come again (iii. 13). In effect God has been "heard" speaking only twice, to Israel and to us, and what He has spoken to both has been the same,—the promise of entering into His rest. Israel came short of it through unbelief; we do enter into the Rest who believe (iv. 3).

So far the Author's view is clear. But the view itself raises some difficulties. One is connected with his conception of the nature of the Rest set before Israel at the Exodus; and another arises from what appears to be a discrepancy between this conception of the Rest offered to Israel and much that is elsewhere said by him of the nature of the first covenant.

When he quotes the words said of Israel, They shall not enter into my Rest, and then exhorts Christians, Let us earnestly strive to enter into His Rest (iv. 10), he evidently identifies the Rest set before Israel with that into which men by faith of Christ enter. The same appears from his words, They to whom the good tidings were before preached failed to enter in (iv. 6); and even more clearly from the assertion, For we have had good tidings preached to us, as they also had (iv. 3)—a proposition which would look more natural to us if its members were inverted. He finds this meaning to be that of the Psalm. When, however, we turn to the Old Testament passages where the Rest is spoken of, and where it is said that God "sware" that Israel should not enter, which are probably the basis of the Psalm (Deut. i. 34–36; Num. xiv. 21–23, xxxii. 10–12; comp. Deut. xii. 9), what appears to be spoken of is simply possession of the land of Canaan. In opposition, however, to such a superficial sense of Old Testament words, we encounter many times in this Epistle an expression of the feeling that Israel and Old Testament saints in general were engaged about matters of far deeper importance than the possession of Canaan, that they were moving among the same religious principles as we ourselves are, requiring from them the same conditions of mind as are required from us. Moses in his situation shared the reproach of Christ (xi. 26). In his day the antithesis existed as it existed in the days of the "Hebrews" between "sin" and the "people of God." The patriarchs sought an heavenly country (xi. 16), and looked for the city that hath the foundations, the heavenly Jerusalem (xi. 10, 16, xii. 22). And the "house of God" is one throughout all history (iii. 1, etc.).

That such representations are true to the spirit of the Old Testament religion might seem implied in calling it a religion. The mere land of Canaan was never in itself all that was understood either by those to whom it was promised or by God who promised it, when it was named as Israel's heritage. The patriarchs and people certainly looked to the possession of the land, but the idea they attached to it, or the light in which they regarded it, was that of a settled place of abode with God, where He would be fully present, and where they would find repose in His fellowship. All those religious ideas, dimly perhaps, yet in longing and imagination, clustered about it which we now attach to the heavenly world. The possession of the land, though an essential part of Israel's happiness, and a true part of its inheritance from God, and neither merely a symbol of spiritual blessings present, nor a type of spiritual blessings to come, always depended on the spiritual relations of Israel to God, and its meaning lay in its being a fitting sphere for those in fellowship with God. It has been said that the religion of Israel was a spiritual realism, an inseparable connection of the spiritual and the physical. The Old Testament starts from the idea of man as we know him, both a spiritual and material being, and a true inheritance from God must satisfy all elements of his nature. Hence the heritage of the saints is never represented as consisting of

mere spiritual relations to God, it embraces a physical sphere as well.

Before the land was entered, into it was dreamed of perhaps as the true abode with God and entrance into His Rest, and exclusion from it was a terrible sentence. When Joshua led the people across its borders, it was found that he had not given them the Rest (iv. 8). Yet the hope was only deferred. And the hope did not become disconnected with the land. Though it was made plain to all spiritual minds that the Rest could never be attained in a condition of the world such as then was, this led no further than to the idea that a more perfect state of the earth would arise with the perfection of the church. Both would be attained in the Messianic age; God would indeed then dwell with His people, and they would find Rest with Him in a transfigured world (Isa. xi., xxxv.; comp. Ps. lxvii., lxxii.). And the realization of this hope was regarded as imminent by every generation of Old Testament saints. When this Epistle goes a step further, and indicates the removal of the material world (xii. 27), it still leaves a certain physical basis for the inheritance of the saints, xii. 22, etc.—This deeper view taken in the Epistle of the meaning of the possession of the land gives significance to the unbelief of Israel, and enables us to see that, so far as they were concerned, they were in a sense rejecting the promise of the Rest.

In this way some of the difficulty disappears, but something still remains. The Author identifies the Rest set before Israel with that into which the church at last enters. His method of arguing tempts the question, What, if Israel had believed, would they have found the rest of Canaan to be? Such a question is idle. Such faith as to have put them in true possession of the Rest of God was not possible in their day. The conditions of it were not given (viii. 6). And this leads to another view which the Epistle presents. It was not the will of God that His Rest should be at once entered into. Christ appeared at the end of the world to put away sin by His sacrifice (ix. 26). It was God's purpose that Old Testament saints should not be made perfect without us (xi. 40). Their dispensation bestowed on them at Sinai made nothing perfect (vii. 11, 18); it was designed to do no more than suggest the perfection to come, and thus of necessity defer for long that perfection. These two views are not harmonized in the Epistle by means of any such idea as that the old dispensation was a penalty for Israel's sin, or that their backwardness made it necessary. Its institution preceded their unbelief. The Author has not distinctly expressed the link of reconciliation doubtless lying in his own mind. To a certain extent an explanation is found in his view of the continuity of the dispensations. The first is but the preliminary stage of the new; both make up one scheme of grace. Israel stood at the farther end of a road, the hither end of which leads into the true Rest of God. They refused to enter upon it. Had they entered, their faith would ultimately have given them the Rest. This is indeed the history of

every believer under the first covenant (ix. 15). And so what has ever been between God and men has been the same divine promises, requiring the same faith, and issuing after whatever lapse of time in the enjoyment of the same Rest with Him. Yet this solution scarcely satisfies the Author's manner of speaking of the Rest. A solution need hardly be sought. The difficulty arises whenever God's nature and His procedure become together the subject of our thought. His design from the beginning was to put men through a preparatory dispensation, deferring for long the full manifestation of salvation, and yet His gracious desire has ever been that men should at once enter into the joy of His Rest.

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## Note on the Word of God.

The passage iv. 12, 13, naturally suggests the gathering together of a few things noticeable in the Epistle on this subject.

The Epistle calls revelation, whether oral or written, a "speaking" of God—God having spoken unto the fathers . . . spake unto us, i. 1; comp. ii. 2, 3, iii. 5, iv. 8, xi. 18, xii. 25. Ordinarily the usual word for "speak" is employed, but sometimes a term more strictly denoting oracular speech, xii. 25; comp. viii. 5, of revelation to Moses; xi. 7, to Noah.—More particularly, He who speaks is the Holy Ghost, iii. 7, x. 15, who even reveals His meaning through the arrangements of the tabernacle, ix. 8, unless the reference here be to the description given in Scripture. The same statements of Scripture are in one place ascribed to God and in another to the Holy Ghost; comp. iii. 7 with iv. 3, 7; viii. 8, 13 with x. 15.

Revelation when spoken is the "word" of God, iv. 12, xiii. 7, comp. vi. 5; or the word spoken, ii. 2, or heard, iv. 2; also the oracles of God, v. 12. Hence when Scripture is quoted the formula usually employed is, He (*i.e.* God) says, He hath said or spoken, or, saying, i. 5, 13, iv. 3, 4, v. 5, 6, vi. 14, viii. 8, 13, x. 30, xii. 26, xiii. 5. This mode of citation is employed even when the passage cited speaks of God Himself, i. 6, 7, iv. 4, 7. Except in one passage, the human writer of Scripture is nowhere referred to, iv. 7. In the citation of another passage, in which God is directly addressed, the indefinite form, "one has somewhere testified," is used, ii. 6. The forms of citation, "Scripture saith," "it is written," common in the Pauline Epistles and elsewhere, do not occur. The term "scripture" is not used, "word of God" has taken its place. Naturally this word of God is chiefly the Old Testament Scriptures, but also the oral word of the New Testament, i. 1, xiii. 7, the accuracy and authority of which are not impaired by its transmission to us through more than one medium, ii. 3. The Author is by many supposed to betray familiarity with the Epistle to the Romans; whether he would have regarded this as the "word" of God can hardly be decided; he applies the term to

the utterances of Christ and the reports of ear-witnesses of the Lord, ii. 3, xiii. 7.

In speaking to men God uses agents, in former times the prophets, i. 1; also the Angels, ii. 2; at the end of these days, the Son. These agents do not themselves speak: God speaks in them, i. 1, or through them, ii. 2. This is true even of the Son, who is the last messenger of God's revelation to men, but still stands on the level of an agent, ii. 3 (*through* the Lord), though His dignity as Son and the great salvation revealed by Him demand more earnest heed to His word, ii. 1–4. Christ is referred to in a historical way as having uttered certain words recorded in Scripture, but these are words of prophecy depicting beforehand His mind and consciousness when in the flesh, ii. 12, 13, x. 5, etc. (see notes); He does not anywhere assume the character of Author of Revelation.

When God "speaks" to men through His agents, men "hear," ii. 1, iii. 7, 16, iv. 2, 7, and His word is the "word of hearing," that is, heard from Him, iv. 2. This is the antithesis which expresses the relations of men and God, and furnishes the ground for human conduct, whether faith on the one hand, or unbelief and disobedience and hardening of the heart on the other. Strictly speaking, only those who listened to God's immediate messengers, the prophets, Angels, or the Son, have "heard," and in this sense the Author of this Epistle and those to whom he wrote are not reckoned among the hearers—the word spoken by the Lord has been confirmed even unto them by those who heard, ii. 3; but in a wider sense those also hear to whom the words of the Son have been reported, and the Old Testament word, *e.g.* Ps. xcv., was spoken directly to men face to face with the new covenant, to which it refers. For the Divine voice referred to in it is that which speaks through the Son, and it is heard as long as it is called To-day, iii. 13, that is, till the Son come again, ix. 28.

As the Author refers chiefly to the Old Testament when speaking of the word of God, it is not probable that he regards it as of less authority or sets it on a lower level than the word spoken through the Son. Indeed the passage, iv. 12, 13, containing such lofty predicates, refers primarily to the Old Testament passage, Ps. xcv. The word spoken through Angels was "stedfast," and the word spoken through the Lord has been "made stedfast" to us, ii. 2, 3. The promises which are verified through the new covenant were given to Abraham, vi. 13, vii. 6, ix. 15; and in demonstrating the appearance of another priesthood, a more perfect sanctuary, a better sacrifice, a new covenant, and an inheritance and Rest in the world to come, amidst the things that cannot be shaken, the Author reasons entirely on the Old Testament.—Ps. cx. and Gen. xiv. in chap. vii.; Ex. xxv. 40 in chap. viii. 1–6 and ix. 1–10; Ps. xl. in chap. x. 1–18; Jer. xxxi. in chap. viii. 7–13; Ps. viii. and Ps. xcv. and Hagg. ii. 6 in chap. ii. 6–9, chap. iii., iv., and chap. xii. 26, etc. The Old Testament word, too, is still used by him in admonishing Christians, x. 30, xii. 5. The New Testament word is to be given more heed to, not

because it is in a higher sense the word of God, but because what it reveals, the new covenant and all the world of realities in heaven, is of greater moment; and with this agrees the greater dignity of the Son who is sent to reveal it, ii. 1; comp. xii. 25. The passage iv. 12 expresses the idea that God indwells in His word, and this idea is so constantly in the mind of the Author that he quotes the word of God as identical with the divine operations which it describes, vii. 18, viii. 13, x. 9.

In quoting the Old Testament the Apostle uses exclusively the Septuagint or Greek translation, and his text is thought to coincide with that exhibited in the Alexandrian MS. of that version. He chiefly quotes the Psalter, adducing at least ten separate Psalms, viz.: Ps. ii. 7 in i. 5, v. 5; Ps. viii. 5, etc., in ii. 6, etc.; Ps. xxii. 22 in ii. 12; Ps. xl. 6, etc., in x. 5, etc.; Ps. xlv. 7 in i. 8; Ps. xcv. 7, etc., in iii. 7, etc., iv. 3, 7; Ps. cii. 25, etc., in i. 10, etc.; Ps. civ. 4 in i. 7; Ps. cx. in i. 13, v. 6, vii. 17, 21; Ps. cxviii. 6 in xiii. 6 (and perhaps Ps. cxxxv. 14 in. x. 30). Other books are more sparingly quoted:—Gen. ii. 2 in iv. 4; Gen. xxi. 12 in xi. 18; Gen. xxii. 16 in vi. 13, etc.; Gen. xlvii. 31 in xi. 21; Ex. xix. 12 in xii. 20; Ex. xxiv. 8 in ix. 20; Ex. xxv. 40 in viii. 5. Perhaps Deut. ix. 19 in xii. 21; Deut. xxxi. 6 (Josh. i. 5) in xiii. 5; Deut. xxxii. 35 in x. 30; Deut. xxxii. 43 (in the Septuagint) in i. 6; 2 Sam. vii. 14 in i. 5; Prov. iii. 11, etc., in xii. 5, etc.; Isa. viii. 18 in ii. 13; Jer. xxxi. 31, etc., in viii. 8, etc., x. 16, etc.; Hos. xiv. 2 in xiii. 15; Hab. ii. 3, etc., in x. 37, etc.; Hagg. ii. 6 in xii. 26. Besides these distinct quotations there are many references in the Epistle to the Old Testament history and teaching; see chap. xi. everywhere.[1]

[1] The Author betrays familiarity with the Old Testament apocryphal writings, *e.g.* the Book of Wisdom (see on i. 3), 1 and 2 Macc.—as was natural, these being a part of the Alexandrian Bible, which he used—and the writings of Philo. It cannot be shown, however, that he has adopted any of Philo's characteristic notions. Even when his language reflects Alexandrian phraseology, it is not Alexandrian ideas, but conceptions peculiar to himself that he expresses through it. For example, the word *sharp*, applied to the word of God in iv. 12, is applied by Philo to the Logos. The Logos is sharp or cutting as Creator. To create in Philo is not to make out of nothing, it is to separate into distinct things an already existing matter. This matter is chaos, to which no positive predicate can be applied, being, in this sense, nothing. To create is to distinguish. Hence to the Logos as specializing in this way, as dividing matter so that it becomes distinct things, is applied the term sharp or *cutting*. In this action he is compared to a seal which stamps an impression on the formless wax. This specializing power he exercises in the world of ideas as well as in the material world. But such an idea as this is wholly unlike the idea in iv. 12.

## THIRD SECTION.—CHAPTER IV. 14–X. 18.

### JESUS AND THE LEVITICAL HIGH PRIEST.

**Jesus is a true sympathizing High Priest; He is a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; and as such a High Priest He has a ministry more excellent than that of the Levitical priesthood by as much as the covenant is better of which He is the Mediator; He has entered through His own blood into the true sanctuary, even the heavens, and obtained eternal redemption, for which cause He is the Mediator of a new covenant, that they which have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.**

Connection.—The connection is not with the immediately preceding words, but with the preceding scope. The exhortation is a resumption, after drawing breath, of the preceding exhortations, such as *let us fear* (iv. 1), *let us strive to enter* (iv. 11), and the like. The exhortation is not, however, so much of the nature of warning as of encouragement, and in this way naturally slides into the ensuing positive doctrine regarding the priesthood of the Son.

This third section, the most important, occupies the main body of the Epistle. With its accompanying applications it may be said to extend to the end of chap. xii. The strictly doctrinal part of the section ends with x. 18, though this is interrupted by the long expostulation preceding the treatment of the Melchisedec priesthood of the Son, chap. v. 11–vi. 20.

The theme of the section is the priesthood of the Son. The importance of this theme to the Author arises from his view of the place of priesthood in any economy of salvation. The priesthood is the basis of the economy. This is a general principle. Consequently the nature of the economy or covenant will depend on the nature or character of its priesthood. The nature of the priesthood the Author calls its *order*, by which he means the character of the priestly *person*, not at all his functions. The functions or ministry of all priests of whatever "order" are virtually the same, consisting of an *approach* unto God with an *offering* within a *sanctuary*. It is the difference in the order, that is, really in the person of the priest, that causes any difference in the worth of the ministry of one priest from that of another. The first covenant or Law was given upon the Levitical priesthood (vii. 11), the priesthood after the order of Aaron. The new covenant is given upon the priesthood of the Son, the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec (ix. 15). Hence in this third section, chap vii., which treats of the order of Melchisedec, is the kernel so far as principles go; the passage chap. iv. 14–v. 10 is preliminary, leading up to chap. vii; and the passage chap. viii.–x. 18 merely develops the "ministry" of the Melchisedec priest. These are the three great divisions of this third section—the first, preliminary, showing that Christ has the character of a true high priest in general; the second, that He is a high priest after the order of Melchisedec; and the third, exhibiting the efficacy of the ministry of such a

high priest. Between the first and the second divisions, however, the Author, brought up before the difficulty of treating the Melchisedec priesthood of the Son with minds so backward as those of the Hebrews, intercalates a long remonstrance with his readers over their decline in knowledge and danger of falling away.

Divisions of the third section:—

*First.* Jesus is a true sympathizing high priest—He is taken from among men, and called of God, chap. iv. 14–v. 10.

*Second.* Remonstrance with the Hebrews over their decline in knowledge, and warning against falling away, chap. v. 11–vi. 20.

*Third.* Jesus a priest, a high priest, after the order of Melchisedec, with the consequences to the Levitical priesthood and economy which the introduction of this new Melchisedec priesthood entails, chap. vii.

*Fourth.* The ministry of the Melchisedec high priest and the new covenant, chap. viii. 1–x. 18 (see particular Outline at chap. viii.).

Chap. iv. 14–v. 10. **Jesus, a true compassionate High Priest.**

**Outline.**—Having, then, a great High Priest,—and His greatness is sufficiently expressed in the words describing His history and present glory, "who hath passed through the heavens,"—let us hold fast our confession (ver. 14). Let us do this, for in the man Jesus, Son of God exalted, we have a High Priest able to feel with us in our infirmities, having been Himself tried in all points as we are (ver. 15); let us therefore approach the throne of God with joyful confidence, that we may find compassion and grace for timely help (ver. 16), iv. 14–16.

2. For compassion and grace belong to the very idea of the high-priestly office. Every high priest is taken *from among men*, and appointed *for men;* and as it is his office to minister towards God in gifts and sacrifices for them, so he is able in doing this to bear gently with their infirmities, being himself one of them, v. 1–3.

And the same character of the office is manifest in this, that the honour is not one which a man arrogates to himself. It is God in pursuance of His purposes of goodness that calls to it. And He will call them that are fit. And thus all assumption in taking the office and all unfeeling hardness in the exercise of it are alike excluded, ver. 4.

3. In all this the high-priesthood of Jesus corresponds fully to the idea of the office. It was no assumption on His part that raised Him to that high honour and glory within which He exercises His office, or rather which is the exercise of it. It was God that appointed Him when He constituted Him Messianic King and saluted Him as Priest for ever (vers. 5, 6). And the road through which He attained to the honour, and learned those qualities fitting Him for the exercise

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our*

of it, was the way of suffering and obedience in the days of His flesh, a way on which He learned well how to put Himself in the place of others whom He has to aid and save, and gave Him the right mind needful for offering for them aright (vers. 7–10; comp. ii. 17), vers. 5–10.

Ver. 14. *Seeing then that we have* . . . A close connection with the words immediately preceding cannot be found without much straining and artifice. It is nowhere the Apostle's purpose to *prove* the facts or truths of the Christian faith (see on i. 5, etc.). The facts have long been substantiated and are assumed. The Epistle is written from the secondary position of theological reflexion upon the facts. The fact that the Son is a High Priest is a commonplace to his readers, though their failure to apprehend the full meaning of this truth, or even their danger of losing the apprehension of it which they once had, is just what explains their wavering and constitutes the precariousness of their condition. Hence, assuming the fact of the Son's Priesthood, the Apostle seeks to set before the Hebrews the obligations and privileges of having such a High Priest. The points gathered together in this verse had already been touched upon in i. 3, 4, ii. 9, 17, 18, iii. 1–6.—*Passed into the heavens;* rather, **passed through** the heavens (vii. 26). The *greatness* of the High Priest (x. 21) is more fully expressed by the words "passed through the heavens," that is, ascended into the highest heavens to God's right hand (ix. 24, i. 4, viii. 1, x. 12). The words "Jesus," recalling His earthly history (ii. 9), and "Son of God," His Messianic Kingship (i. 2, iii. 6), but repeat the phrase, passed through the heavens. Having, then, such a High Priest, human and exalted to be Lord of all, let us hold fast our confession. See on iii. 1.

Ver. 15. Let us hold fast . . . *for* our High Priest is able to sympathize with our infirmities. This is carried in the name "Jesus," with all the human history that it recalls. The fine rendering, *touched with the feeling of* (Gr. **sympathize**), is due to the Geneva Version. *Infirmities* or weaknesses are those things in us, whether moral or bodily, which, when acted upon by trial, give way and lead us into error.[1] Such qualities are common to all who partake of human nature, although in some they may exist in greater degree; and some in whom they exist may from favourable circumstances hardly be aware of them, and feel strong because never put to the proof. It is certain, however, that life, however lived, has its temptations, and those who escape its hardness are even more dangerously ensnared by its softness. Such weaknesses are properly innocent, though they may be the cause of sin, just as if in excess they may be the result of sin, or even themselves sinful. They are spoken of here as parts of our nature, innocent in themselves, but the natural points

[1] Of course, strictly, our "weaknesses" are the conditions produced by the action of temptation.

15 profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all

for temptations to lay hold of. With them in themselves, and with the Hebrews as compassed about by them, and in the circumstances of trial in which they were, their High Priest is able to sympathize.

*But was tempted* . . . ; or, **but one in all points tempted.** *Tempted* is tried; not direct seduction to evil is meant by the word, but afflictions in the course of a life of well-doing, and because of well-doing, which, however, indirectly become temptations to evil. The Son was made in all points like His brethren (ii. 17), and the one "all points" implies the other. For life is not made up of details, but of principles. What was needful in the High Priest was not the actual experience of each trial to which any one might ever be subjected, but a mind schooled in trial so as to have a fellow-feeling and bear gently (v. 2) with those tempted. What He was and His circumstances made His life a typical human life, so that not only we who follow are exhorted to consider Him (xii. 3), but they who preceded Him, like Moses, were drawing rude outlines and narrower circles of His one life, and, though without full consciousness, suffering His reproach (xi. 26). In point of fact, His life even in outward circumstances, and more in its moral meaning, was a very various one. He was child, boy, man; son, servant, friend, master; poor, though possessing all riches; the idol of the people, and the aversion of the privileged; familiar with the saddest sides of life, and having access to behold the easiest; with meek, most earnest souls hanging on His lips at one moment, and having charges of blasphemy flung at Him the next; exciting wherever He came, speculation, wonder, love, and furious dislike; cast into the midst of human life, and realizing the principles that make up its moral meaning with a consciousness clearer than if they had been material things about Him; playing the first part among minor actors in the drama of which His country with its social and religious hopes was the stage, and the solitary part in that drama of which the meaning cannot be expressed, whose stage was heaven and earth.—The Apostle is writing to Hebrews whose temptations came directly from the pressure of external circumstances, and hence he alludes most of all to the temptations which Christ suffered from without, His afflictions and ignominy, ii. 14, 18, v. 7, etc., xii. 2, etc., xiii. 12, etc. Each of these was a force bearing on Him to draw Him away from His mission, and make Him falter or turn aside or seek its accomplishment in a softer way. To us who live at ease, the inner side of His life may speak better things—the temptation to use the spiritual powers which He possessed to minister to cravings not unnatural to the human body or mind. Along with this must have gone the temptation to assumption from conscious superiority—to spiritual pride or spiritual disdain. But He is only disappointed when His brethren fail to equal His own great deeds (Matt. xiv. 31), and His simplicity of mind is seen in His unaffected wonder at the faith of

16 points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

others (Matt. viii. 10). From His disregard of social relations, one temptation might seem unknown to Him, and that the greatest, the temptation to love evil in those we love, or to be lowered into the colder moral atmosphere of intense human affection, or to shrink from what is required of us that would pain it. Yet Christ loved, too, and was loved, and His alarm at the suggestion of Peter (Matt. xvi. 22) betrays that here, too, lay His weakest point.

*Yet without sin;* or, *apart from* sin, certainly means that He came out of all His trials sinless; it probably means more, viz. that sin in Him did not exist; He is often called sinless in the Epistle, vii. 26, ix. 14. The main point to the Hebrews, however, was that He was tempted like as they were, and came through all His temptations victorious (xii. 2, etc.), and so with His help (ii. 18) may they. It might be supposed that to sinful men a high priest who had known sin would be fuller of sympathy. But the Apostle is not writing to men as sinners, to men who have fallen, but to men in danger of falling. And to the condition of such men, Christ's history appeals with power; He knew all temptation, and can sympathize with those tempted; He overcame it, and this gives Him skill and power in opening up a way of escape. And even of sin a sinner is an ill judge; he will either regard it with undue abhorrence, or with mawkish sentiment, or with a callousness that comes of thinking it a matter of course among men. A clear, uncoloured view of it, and of those liable to it, can only be found in the mind tempted but unfallen.

Ver. 16. *Let us come . . . boldly;* or, **draw near with** (glad) **confidence**. On confidence, see on iii. 6.—*Draw near* is the favourite term in the Epistle for approach in worship or service, vii. 25, x. 1, 22, xi. 6. We draw near through our High Priest, and to the *throne of grace, i.e.* God's throne, now a throne of grace. To say that we can draw near to the throne, and to say that is a throne of grace, is to say the same thing (ix. 8, with ix. 12, x. 19–22).—On *mercy*, see on ii. 17. *Grace* is favour, goodwill. It is the state of God's mind towards men through Christ (see on x. 29), though this is liable to be confused with the gifts due to such a state of God's mind. It is possible that mercy is considered the quality of the High Priest (ii. 17), and grace as that of God. Both conspire to give the timeous help (ii. 18). As seen at first, that which sits upon the throne might seem the figure of Grace, and that which stands by it, Compassion. More clearly seen, the sight is better—it is God and Christ—and the throne being the throne of God, and grace its characteristic, all things and every creature become the ministers of grace (Rom. viii. 28).

Chap. v. 1–10. **The exhortations in iv. 14–16 are supported by refer-**

V. 1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained
for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both
2 gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the
ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he
3 himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason
hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to

**ence to the very idea of the high-priestly office, to which the Son's priesthood more than corresponds.**

1. Every high priest is taken from among men, and able to bear gently with their infirmities, being himself compassed about with the same, vers. 1–3. 2. The same gentleness is guaranteed in the high priest by this, that the office is not one which any one arrogates to himself, but takes only when called to it of God, who will call them that are meet, ver. 4. 3. All this has its full truth in Christ, who was called to the office by God, after He had learned in that severe school that made Him perfect to be the Author of salvation, vers. 5–10.

Ver. 1. *For every high priest taken . . .*; rather, **being taken**, seeing he is taken. The statement might almost be put in two propositions: every high priest is taken from among men, and is appointed for men in reference to God, in order to offer, etc. The object or meaning of His office is to minister on behalf of men towards God in atoning sacrifice, and in order to do this well, and with the duly compassionate disposition and mind, he is taken from among men.—*Gifts and sacrifices* are general terms describing all kinds of offerings, viii. 3, 4, ix. 9; comp. xi. 4.

Ver. 2. *Who can have compassion*, lit. **being able to feel gently towards . . .** The word (*metriopathy*) expresses the feeling that lies between apathy and undue excitement; here the feeling of moderation or leniency towards others, which is far removed from severity. —The ignorant and erring or out of the way are those falling into sins which are to be described as not wilful or done with a high hand, usually called "sins of ignorance." Under this head fall not merely sins done inadvertently, but sins into which one may be betrayed by selfishness or passion (Lev. v. 1, xix. 20–22) or force of circumstances. For such sins the sacrifices were provided. For the other class of sins, those done wilfully and aimed against the covenant itself, there was no sacrifice. The Author carries this Old Testament principle over into the new covenant; for rebellion against the covenant itself there is no sacrifice (x. 26). It seems probable, indeed, that only sins coming under this class of "errors" are regarded by him as pardonable through sacrifice, and that to this class belong the transgressions under the first covenant (ix. 15) which the offering of the Son redeemed.—*For that he . . . infirmity.* The high priest's own consciousness of infirmity makes him bear gently with the erring.

Ver. 3. *And by reason . . . he ought;* or, **is bound** (Tynd. Gen.); by reason of his own infirmity the high priest is under obligation to

4 offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself,
5 but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.

offer for himself as well as for the people. The obligation perhaps refers mainly to the legal command (Lev. xvi. 6, 11), but may also refer to the pressure of his own conscience. This verse merely lays emphasis on the "infirmity" or weakness of ver. 2, which is so much a fact that both law and conscience recognise it. Perhaps the Law designed to stimulate the remembrance of it, and thus to keep alive gentleness of feeling to others.—The point is, the leniency of feeling in the high priest which comes from his being *himself a man. Thus far* the Son agrees with the ordinary high priest, though not in the sinfulness of the infirmity (vii. 28). That the "infirmity" of the high priest here, or vii. 28, refers merely to ceremonial irregularity and the consequent disabilities, should never have been imagined.

Ver. 4. *And no man . . . this honour;* rather, the honour, *i.e.* the dignity of the high-priestly office.—*But he that is called;* rather, but (takes it) when he is called of God, even as was Aaron. Here is a principle:—A man takes the office, not out of personal assumption, but when called of God; and an illustration—the case of Aaron (Ex. xxviii. 1). Were the office arrogated to himself by any one, the same arrogancy might mark his exercise of it. But God appoints to the office, and the appointment is in behalf of men (ver. 1), and this is security for the fit disposition in the high priest.

If reference to the divine call stood in another connection, it might seem referred to as that which legitimates the exercise of the office, and confers authority to act between God and men. But this idea of authority finds no points of contact in the rest of the passage. The verses 5–10, also, which form a unity, for they begin and end with the same quotation, directly support this 4th verse, yet what they dwell upon is Christ's human life of suffering and obedience, through which He rose to that perfection which fitted Him to be called to the high-priestly office. It cannot be doubted, therefore, that what the divine call secures in the high priest, or rather what it sets its seal to as being found in him (and here lies its necessity), is just those qualities of compassion and understanding sympathy referred to in iv. 14–16 and v. 1–3.[1]

Vers. 5–10. Christ's appointment and high-priestly character fully correspond to what has just been said of the office.

Ver. 5 passes from the general principles regarding the office; vers. 1–4, to the *facts* in Christ's history.—*Glorified not himself.* The change of word is to be observed; the office of high priest in general is an honour (ver. 4), in the case of Christ it is a "glory" (comp. iii. 3)—the reference being to the actual circumstances of Christ's assuming

[1] That artificial, chiastic division of vers. 1–10, much in favour, which makes vers. 5, 6, correspond to ver. 4, the divine call, and vers. 7–10 to vers. 1–3, the human compassion, is unworthy of any attention.

6 As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a Priest for ever,
7 after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with

*His* high-priestly office.—On the Son's *glory* see on ii. 9.—*But he that said unto him, i.e.* but He (glorified Him to make Him High Priest) that said unto Him, Thou art my Son. The meaning might be that these words were said to Him *when* He was made High Priest (see on i. 5). The other words in ver. 6 are certainly regarded as used on this occasion, *i.e.* on His ascension (comp. "addressed" in ver. 10 with "made perfect," ver. 9). From the Author's habit, however, of using quotations apart from all reference to time or place, and merely for the sake of the *relation* which they express (see on i. 5), it is safest to throw the point of *time* aside.—Instead of saying "God," the Writer says, "He that spake unto Him, Thou art my Son," the point emphasized being His relation to God as *Son*. The connection of the verses 5–10 seems this: Vers. 5, 6, state the *fact* that God called Christ to be Priest, He did not assume the glory Himself; and vers. 7–10 describe the process through which Christ rose to the perfection that led to His divine appointment, in other words the *circumstances* of His call, showing how far distant all assumption was. As vers. 5, 6, describe the fact of Christ's appointment, the reference to the relation of Son can only be in order to show that the appointment was natural and has nothing surprising in it. It is by no means meant that the priesthood of Christ was *involved* in His sonship (Alf.), an *à priori* method of conception wholly foreign to the Epistle, but merely that it was suitable in one who was Son, being indeed possible to none other (see on i. 3).

Ver. 6. *As he saith also* . . . Ver. 5 having emphasized the relation of sonship, which made His appointment to be High Priest of men natural and possible, the Apostle now quotes a passage describing His actual appointment (Ps. cx. 4).

Vers. 7–10. The way through which Christ attained to the true disposition of High Priest, and so was called of God to the office.

The verses literally run thus: Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up . . . and having been heard for His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience . . . and having been made perfect, He became . . . addressed of God an High Priest, etc.—The statement is: Who in the days of His flesh, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience from the things which He suffered. The *days of His flesh* means His life upon the earth. Though He was a Son He learned obedience; this is stated to obviate the very idea of assumption on His part. It is not remarkable that a son should be obedient, and it is not meant that the disposition of obedience was ever wanting to Him. But the disposition had to maintain itself in the face of greater and greater demands upon it. And as He had to meet these demands rising with the rising tide of things which He suffered, He entered ever more deeply into the experience of what obedience was. For the demands could not be met without

strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him
8 from death, and was heard in that he feared: though he were

the resistance and shrinking of His human nature (Matt. xxvi. 39), and the overcoming of this was an advance in obedience (comp. xii. 2). The progress may perhaps even be seen in Matt. xxvi. 39 with 42. When the Writer says "learned" obedience, he has no doubt in his mind the contrast between the Son's former state and His state in the days of His flesh, the latter of which, especially on its side of suffering, was to Him a thing wholly new.—This was the disposition and demeanour of Jesus while on the way towards that glory of His appointment to which God called Him.

The clauses: having offered up prayers . . . and having been heard for His godly fear, illustrate the statement, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Here He is seen learning obedience. The example brought forward is His supreme act of obedience, viz. suffering death (x. 5, etc.; Phil. ii. 8), and the language of the passage reflects the scene in Gethsemane. The Evangelical tradition preserved to us does not mention *tears;* the oral account heard by the Author may have contained this trait, or he may have supposed it included (Matt. xxvi. 37; Ps. xxii. 25); comp. the two accounts of Jacob's wrestling, Gen. xxxii. 26 and Hos. xii. 5. The *strong crying* need not necessarily refer to the cry on the cross, though this may be included, the general scene being that of the Son's great, final act of obedience. Then He offered supplications to Him that was able to save Him *from death*, or, *out of death.* These words might mean either that He prayed to be saved from dying, or, that He prayed to be delivered out of the power of death, a sense which would admit that He contemplated falling into its power for a time. The historical sense of His prayer is the first; but it is not impossible that the Writer, as he elsewhere lays great emphasis on the fact that the Son came into the world to do the will of God, that is, offer Himself in death (x. 7), gave a slightly different turn to the tradition, just as a similar turn in the same sense is given by St. Peter to Ps. xvi. The sense "out of death" would make the phrase "having been heard" easier. The prayer being addressed "to Him that was able to save Him from death," referred to death and salvation from it. And when it is said that He was *heard*, that must mean that His prayer was in effect answered. But it might be answered truly, though not quite as offered; that is, the answer might be given in His being raised from the dead, although the prayer was that He might not die. In any case the prayer was to be saved from death, and the hearing must correspond to this; mere strengthening to bear death (Luke xxii. 43) seems to fall far below its meaning.

*In that he feared;* or, **for his godly fear.** The word here means properly **cautiousness**, as in handling or approaching an object, hence reverence, or reverent fear in regard to God. The adjective is rendered *devout* in our Bible (Luke ii. 25; Acts ii. 5, viii. 2), and the word itself "reverence," Heb. xii. 28; and the verb is used of the fea-

a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suf-
9 fered; and being made perfect, he became the author of

akin to precaution of the chief captain in regard to the Apostle Paul's life (Acts xxiii. 10; comp. Heb. xi. 7). The term does not seem applicable to a terror such as death inspires, and such renderings as *heard* (and saved) *from his* (mental) *terror*, or from that which was his terror (death), seem inadmissible.—The clause throws emphasis on the Son's reverent submission by showing how real it was and how acceptable to God, who met it on His part with the salvation prayed for. These mutual relations between God and Christ show the line along which He rose to His present glory of high priesthood, and indicate His fitness to "help" amidst trials, as well as to "offer" on men's behalf. The clause is subordinate, and somewhat anticipates ver. 9.[1]

Ver. 9. *And being made . . .* ; or, **and having been made perfect.** This states the result reached through the way described, vers. 7, 8. Points of contrast are:—"Unto Him that was able to save Him," ver. 7, with "Author of eternal salvation," ver. 9; "learned obedience," ver. 8, with "all them that obey Him," ver. 9. The words "having been made perfect" therefore take up "learned obedience," and not "having been heard," and the "perfection" refers mainly to that inward condition of mind to which the Son attained, when it had taken on the marks of His human experience, and carried in it the enduring lessons of His life with God in the flesh. This condition it was that enabled Him to become the Author of eternal salvation so far as that depended on disposition as High Priest, which in all this passage is the main thing in question (comp. ii. 17).—On "perfection" see on ii. 10, and Note to chap. x.—On "eternal salvation" see on i. 14 and on ix. 12; comp. vii. 25, ix. 15. The Epistle does not scruple to use the word "save" even of the Son, so complete is the parallel between His history and relation to God and that of men (ii. 9, 14).

[1] The word "offer" prayers is that used of the high priest, ver. 3, and it has been contended that the prayers of Christ correspond to the sacrifice of the high priest for himself, being such an offering as became His sinless infirmity, as that of the high priest was necessary for his sins. But—1. Such a view as that the Lord offered in any way for Himself seems to contradict vii. 28. 2. What is here said of Christ belongs not to His function as an high priest, but to His preparation for becoming an high priest (ver. 10). This is the point of view of the passage (Note to chap. vii.). 3. The mention of the offering of the high priest for himself (ver. 3) is merely incidental and in order to reflect back light from it upon His human sympathy, the point actually in question. The mention of Christ's supplications brings out the same point in his mind, but the inference that His supplications and the high priest's offering belong to the same category is a hasty one. More cautious, and in itself true, but still without support from the connection or the immediate purpose of the passage, is the view that all this travail of soul of the Son was part of His offering of Himself for our sins, and enters into the worth of it. The worth of His offering is not here in question, nor anything connected with His offering in itself; the whole passage bears upon the mental disposition of the Son as a High Priest, and illustrates this from His life on earth, which led up to His becoming High Priest.—The word "offer" is used in Greek of prayers when no sacrificial idea is included.

10 eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God
11 an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we

Ver. 10. *Called of God an High Priest, i.e.* named *an High Priest*, or addressed as *an High Priest;* not, called to be an High Priest, though this is implied. When the Son ascended and appeared in the sanctuary on high, God saluted Him or addressed Him as an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and, of course, in virtue of such an address constituted Him such an High Priest.—The characteristic of Melchisedec's priesthood is that he is a priest *for ever;* see on chap. vii.

In saying an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the Author had reached the topic of the Melchisedec priesthood. It is to be specially observed, however, that in all the passage, iv. 14–v. 10, this point of the Melchisedec priesthood of the Son does not come into consideration. What is shown is that the Son has the characteristics of a true High Priest *in general*. The word Melchisedec used in it belongs to the quotations, with one of which the Author skilfully closes the passage, introducing Melchisedec as the subject to which he will next proceed.

Chap. v. 11–vi. 20. **Complaint of the Apostle over the backward condition in respect of knowledge of the truth into which the Hebrews have fallen, which makes it difficult for him to put his teaching in a way intelligible to them.**

**Connection.**—Having shown them in iv. 14–v. 10 that the Son was possessed of the characteristics of a true High Priest in general, the Apostle closed his illustration of this truth by quoting the saying that He was named of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec (ver. 10). He would then naturally have gone on immediately to develop the nature of this priesthood, as he does ultimately in chap. vii. But he is arrested by the difficulties of such a task, not an easy one in itself, in the face of the backward condition into which the Hebrews have fallen. Expostulation with them over this condition becomes the starting-point for a long practical discourse, in the midst of which one of the most startling warnings in the Epistle against apostasy is uttered. From this the Author turns to encourage his readers by reference to the certainty of the promises, and in speaking of the promises he is led again to introduce the Melchisedec priesthood, and thus returns to the point from which his complaint had diverted him.

**Outline.**—This Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is a large subject and difficult to set before readers who have fallen into such a low state of Christian intelligence as the Hebrews, who are babes and need milk, not solid food such as teaching of this kind is, vers. 11–14.

2. Solid food, such as the Author designs to communicate, is for *full-grown men*, and in saying this he intimates with sufficient plainness what they should be, and what considering the time they must be held

have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye
12 are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be
teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the

to be, and therefore he will not speak of the elementary doctrines of the Christian faith, but will go on with his original design, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith towards God, doctrine of baptism, and other things which belong to the beginning of the faith, vi. 1–3.

3. He will go on to his higher teaching, for first, the attempt to lay again a foundation of repentance, if that were needed, would be a vain one. It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened and have then fallen away, vers. 4–8.

4. But he will go on, second, because he is persuaded that the Hebrews are not in this condition, but still on the way of salvation. Their former Christian life, and their present love to the people of God, is guarantee to him of this. And though he hold up the awful picture of apostasy before them, his design in all that he says is to quicken the diligence of every one of them in regard to the full assurance of his own hope, that they become not sluggish, but in their faith and constancy imitators of such as inherit the promises, vers. 9–12.

5. In this constancy of hope they have an example in Abraham, who patiently endured and at last received the promise. And they have a strong encouragement in the manner of the promises themselves, which are not only promises, but promises confirmed by an oath, vers. 13–20.

Vers. 11–14. **Complaint of the dulness of apprehension which has settled down on the minds of the Hebrews.**

Ver. 11. *Of whom, i.e.* not of Melchisedec, but of Christ an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec (ver. 10). Concerning this subject the Author has, first, *many things to say*—the subject as he has it in his mind is large (it occupies chap. vii. 1–x. 18 of the Epistle); and second, what he has to say is *hard to be uttered*, or, **hard to interpret**, that is, expound or express in the right way.—The reason of this difficulty—*seeing ye are dull;* rather, **are become** dull of hearing. The condition was one into which they had fallen. Dulness of hearing is a figure for slowness of understanding. As it is difficult to strike the right tone and key to make a deaf person hear, it was difficult to find such forms of thought and expression as would make their way into the ear of their mind.

Ver. 12. *For the time, i.e.* in consideration of the length of time since they had received the truth (xiii. 7, x. 32).—*Ye have need that* one *teach you again which be;* rather perhaps, **ye have again need**

first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such
13 as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every
one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness;

**that some one teach you the first principles** (lit. the rudiments of the beginning) of the oracles of God. They had been so long enlightened that they ought to have been able to be themselves teachers, but instead of this they had so declined that they again had need of some one to teach them the initial elements of the oracles of God. The *oracles* of God usually refer to the Old Testament Scriptures, and there might be an insinuation that the Hebrews were losing hold of more than what was distinctively Christian. Against this, however, is the *again;* and vi. 1 distinctly refers to elementary Christian teaching. This sharp language is, however, of the nature of a reproach, and the fact that the Author notwithstanding proceeds to lay before his readers his teaching in regard to the Melchisedec High Priest suggests the deductions to be made from its literal meaning. At the same time such language can hardly have been addressed to the church at Jerusalem.—If the rendering, *that* one *teach you which be*, is adopted, the meaning is not very different; *which be* would signify *how it is with* elementary truths (comp. John x. 6; Acts xvii. 9), viz. that they are so, and what their relative importance is, and how the Hebrews had been habituating their minds only to truths of this character. This sense, however, fails to bring out the antithesis between the two halves of the verse.[1]—There is no emphasis on "some one" of a cynical kind, as if—"first rudiments, what all know and any one can teach" (Alf.). This would be a slight of his readers of which the Author, who is serious and severe, but nowhere sarcastic, is not likely to have been guilty.

*And are become . . . strong meat;* rather, **solid food**, *i.e.* fully such as have need of milk and are unable to receive solid food. What food they take they require to be given them in the shape of milk (1 Cor. iii. 2), they cannot "manage" solid food. An emphasis falls on the words *solid food*—such as I wish to offer.

Ver. 13 takes up the last clause of ver. 12, especially the words *solid food.—That useth milk*, *i.e.* habitually, who feeds on milk; this recurs to the words, Ye have need of milk (ver. 12).—*Unskilful in the word;* or, **unskilled in**, without experience of.—*For he is a babe*, he who feeds on milk is without experience in the word of righteousness, for his use of milk proves him to be a babe, and of course it is characteristic of babes to be without experience. The words *without experience* are explained by the opposite idea in ver. 14, who by reason of use have their senses exercised. The emphasis of the expression falls on "without experience," not on "word of righteousness." The latter is an expression not for higher teaching, such as the doctrine of the Melchisedec priesthood, but for religious truth or particularly, Christian truth in general. In all this general region

[1] The difference between *some one* and *which?* is merely an accent (comp. o iii. 16). Such accents do not appear in the MSS.

14 for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that
are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their
senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

VI. 1 THEREFORE leaving the principles of the doctrine of
Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the

the Hebrews, being babes, and having habituated themselves only to elementary doctrines, are unfamiliar; or keeping to the figure, their organs are unexercised and cannot receive or discriminate. Why this general region of truth, however, should be called the word of righteousness is less easy to see. It has righteousness in men for its aim; or it sets before men an object for faith, and so for righteousness (xi. 4, 7).

Ver. 14. Ver. 13 expanded the last clause of ver. 12, exposing the condition into which the Hebrews had fallen, which made them unfit to receive the solid food which the Apostle desired to offer; ver. 14, by contrast, shows the kind of persons for whom his solid food is suitable—solid food (such as I offer) is for full-grown men.—*Strong meat . . . full age;* or, **solid food is for the full grown**—for such as are not babes, familiar only with milk, but whose organs of sense are exercised, through their use of them, and who are able to discern good and evil, that is, what is wholesome and what is injurious. The expressions in this verse are opposed to those in ver. 13,—"solid food" to "milk," "full grown" to "babes," and "senses exercised" to "without experience," etc.

Chap. vi. 1–3. **The Apostle's resolution not to speak of rudimentary truths, but to proceed to what is higher.**

**Connection.**—The connection is difficult to seize. It may be as follows. The Author had announced the great subject of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ (v. 10). Then he reproaches the Hebrews with being babes, needing milk, and not having their organs of sense exercised so as to be able to receive such "solid food." But this is not a mere dull prosaic statement of their condition; it is a reproach, and contains in it an appeal and a stimulus (ver. 11). And ver. 14, which contains a contrasted picture of the condition of those to whom such solid food as his *belongs*, and for whom it is suitable, is not a mere elaborate foil to set off their dulness; it contains in it from its very terms an exhortation. "Solid food is for full-grown men"—solid food, such as I desire to offer, is for the full grown, such as ye ought to be, such as considering the time (v. 12) ye must be held to be; *therefore* let me omit discourse concerning the first principles of Christ, and go on to that which is "full growth" (vi. 1).

Ver. 1. *Leaving the principles of the doctrine;* lit. **leaving speech of the beginning of Christ** (v. 12), that is, omitting to speak, dismissing speech, concerning the first principles of Christ.—*Let us go on . . . perfection,* lit. **let us press on unto full growth.** The word

foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith
2 toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of

"full growth" (*i.e.* intellectual) takes up "perfect" or full grown of ver. 14. — It is questioned whether we have here—(1) the expression of a resolution on the Author's part, as a teacher; or (2) an exhortation to his readers, among whom he condescends to include himself; or (3) a combination of the two, — the expression of a resolution to go on to *teach* higher truths, and in the same words an exhortation to his readers to press on to intellectual maturity. The last can hardly be, because it necessitates taking the participles "leaving" and "not laying," and the expression "press on," in two different senses at once. In favour of (1) are the following things :— 1. The first clause of vi. 1 seems naturally to mean, leaving discourse concerning, omitting to speak of, the rudiments of Christ. 2. The *again* in "not laying again a foundation" suggests a specific act on the part of a teacher (comp. *again* in v. 12), and the phrase "to lay a foundation" is also more suitable to a teacher, especially a foundation of the doctrine of baptisms (ver. 2). 3. The part of a teacher is suggested also by the words "this will we do" (ver. 3), and particularly by the phrase "it is impossible to renew them again"—the active form "to renew" referring to the efforts of men, for the hindrance to renewal does not lie in the mind of the fallen, but in the dispensations of God (vers. 7, 8). 4. The idea of an exhortation in vers. 1–3 cannot be connected with vers. 4–8. How could the Author say: Do not be always laying a foundation of repentance (ver. 1) . . . for it is impossible to renew again to repentance them that have fallen (vers. 4, 6)? What he does seem to say is: Let me not seek to lay again a foundation of repentance, for this were vain—it is impossible to renew again to repentance them who were once enlightened and have fallen away. Of course a Christian teacher desires to be understood, and in expressing his resolution the Writer hopes his readers will share in what he does; but the words seem said by the Author of his own procedure alone, and contain no expressed exhortation, though an implied one. The *us*, ver. 1, is that of authorship, vers. 9, 11.

He will not again go over first principles with them, although with some dexterity he takes occasion to enumerate such principles. They fall into three groups, each containing a pair of related subjects. They are :—

Repentance from dead works, and, faith towards God.
The doctrine of baptisms, and, laying on of hands.
Resurrection of the dead, and, eternal judgment.[1]

—*The foundation;* rather, **a foundation.** The subjects are enumerated in the natural order in which they would be brought before men's minds, whether in preaching or catechetical teaching. The first two

[1] As to construction each word may depend on "foundation"—a foundation of repentance . . . faith . . . doctrine . . . laying on, etc. Or the expressions after "baptisms" may depend immediately on "doctrine"—doctrine of baptisms and (doctrine of) laying on, etc. The latter construction would be more precise.

hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judg-

groups, repentance and baptism, are brought together in St. Peter's sermon at Pentecost, Acts ii. 38 ; the first and third in his subsequent address, Acts iii. 19–21, and are referred to by St. Paul before Agrippa as the great subjects of his preaching, Acts xxvi. 20.

The first group, repentance and faith, embraces the doctrines first brought before a sinner's mind (Mark i. 15 ; Acts xvii. 30, xxvi. 20). Teaching on these would include an account of their meaning, their necessity, and men's duty. Repentance and faith are but different sides of one complex act of the mind (Acts xx. 21). As here distinguished, repentance has reference to the past, and faith to the future. The mind takes up a new attitude towards its own acts behind and God's promises before. Usually it will be the thought of God and His promises that produces the mind's revulsion from the past, for mere moral shame of sin is not called repentance—Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—Faith is toward God, that is, God as speaking to men (iii. 7), or promising (vi. 12), or as now in Christ fulfilling His promises made of old (iv. 1, ix. 15 ; comp. vi. 18, xi. 13, etc.).—See on faith on xi. 1.

Repentance is from dead works. *Dead* works are not works as such, nor all works done before or apart from Christ, for the Pauline antithesis of faith and works does not belong to the Epistle. Elsewhere dead works are said to defile the conscience, that is, leave a stain on the consciousness of him who does them (ix. 14), and the blood of Christ purifies "the conscience" from them, as the legal sacrifices cleansed the "flesh" of the offerer. That dead works, therefore, should be these very ceremonial observances done in obedience to the Law, as is often said, is too bizarre an idea. Dead works are sinful works. They cannot, therefore, be called dead merely as being unfruitful, or having no life in them towards God, or being animated by no life from God, which is hardly enough ; they seem so called because being sinful they belong to the sphere of that which is separate from the living God, the sphere of death (ii. 14, etc.), and the man on whose conscience they lie feels that he belongs to this sphere, and hence when they are purified he can serve the living God (ix. 14).—On the place of repentance in early apostolic preaching, see Acts v. 31, xi. 18 ; comp. Acts iii. 13–19.

The second group, baptism and the laying on of hands. The historical sequence is followed in the enumeration. When a sinner repented and believed, the next step was that he was baptized for the remission of sins, and connected with this was prayer and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 38, 41, viii. 12, 15–17 ; comp. Acts ix. 17 with xxii. 16). Through the remission of sins the convert became a member of the house of God in the new covenant (ix. 15 ; Jer. xxxi. 34 in viii. 12), heir of the promises (vi. 17), partaker of a heavenly calling (iii. 1) to the world to come, of which through the gift of the Holy Ghost he then tasted the powers (vi. 5 ; comp. ii. 4, x. 29). Early baptism was into the name of Christ, implying a con-

3, 4 ment. And this will we do, if God permit. For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have

fession of His Messiahship (Acts viii. 16, x. 48, xix. 5); so in the Epistle, Christ occupies the place of High Priest and Apostle in our confession (iii. 1, iv. 14). The act of immersion naturally suggested that the old life was done away and that a new man had arisen, and thus the preceding repentance and faith were confirmed.—The plural *baptisms* probably refers to the various Jewish washings (ix. 10), the baptism of John (Acts xix. 3), and Christian baptism, in their distinction from one another and in the meanings of the last. That teaching regarding baptisms and the Holy Ghost was not always unnecessary in the case of Hebrew converts may be seen from Acts xviii. 25, etc., and xix. 2, etc.

As through baptism the convert became a member of the house of God, through the laying on of hands he received endowments fitting him for service in the house, and an earnest of his relation to the world to come (vi. 5).—The Holy Ghost seems spoken of in the Epistle as the source of extraordinary gifts (ii. 4); He is not regarded as the principle of the Christian life in itself, as in the Pauline Epistles. —The laying on of hands was itself a symbol. It did not mean that any gift passed from the person laying on his hands to the person on whom they were laid: it was merely an impressive action accompanying prayer for the person, expressing either the petitioner's deep interest in him by a natural gesture, or marking him as the object on whom the gift prayed for was to fall (Acts viii. 15 with 17, vi. 6; comp. xiii. 3 with xiv. 23).

Third group, resurrection and judgment, constituting the believer's outlook under which he was to live (ix. 27, x. 37, and on the other side x. 27, xii. 28). These two were essential elements of early apostolic preaching, particularly in connection with the resurrection of Christ (Acts i. 22, iv. 2, x. 42, xxiii. 6).

Ver. 3. *And this will we do . . . permit*, refers to the positive purpose of vers. 1, 2—go on unto perfection, though including the negative —not laying a foundation, etc. The Author will go on to his purpose if God permits, God granting him ability to communicate and them capacity to receive (v. 11)—a devout expression of his sense of dependence in relation to his readers on God; comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 7.

Vers. 4–8. **The Apostle will go on to his higher teaching without laying again a foundation of repentance and the like, for, if such a foundation were again required, the attempt to lay it on his part would be vain.**

Ver. 4. *For it is impossible . . . ; for* is based on the words in ver. 3, "this will we do," not on "if God permit," on which no emphasis falls.—The following words read literally: For those once having been enlightened, and having tasted . . . and having become partakers . . . and having tasted . . . and having fallen away, it is impossible to renew again unto repentance. The proposition is: It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who, having once been enlightened . . . fell away. The passage corresponds in a

tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the
5 Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the
6 powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew

general way to vers. 1–3. It describes those in whose case a foundation had been laid in teaching, which had been responded to by believing, followed by experiencing, who then had fallen away; and it is affirmed that it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. The case is put generally, though in a historical form.

*Once enlightened* . . . Enlightened describes the general effect of Christian truth upon the mind; comp. x. 32 of the illumination given when the gospel is first received, called in x. 26 receiving the knowledge of the truth. *Once* implies not only a distinct historical fact, but perhaps attributes to the enlightenment a certain absoluteness from the nature of the act, carrying a shade of implication that it is incapable of repetition (opposed to *again*, ver. 6); comp. once purified, x. 2; ix. 26, once manifested; ix. 28, once offered (xii. 26, 27). Such an illumination throws light on all that a man is in himself and in his actions, and on his relations to all things and especially towards God. Hence the mind's action under it will be repentance and faith,—the first group of first principles (ver. 1), to which enlightenment here probably corresponds.

*And have tasted . . . gift;* or, and tasted. If the participles be not used, the indefinite past should be employed. The *heavenly gift* is no doubt here the forgiveness of sin, which is the great gift of the new covenant (viii. 12, x. 17 with Jer. xxxi. 34). To *taste* is to enjoy and experience (comp. xiii. 10).—*Partakers of the Holy Ghost.* See on ver. 2. The heavenly gift and this go together. The two united seem to correspond to the second group of first principles, baptism and the laying on of hands.

Ver. 5. *And have tasted . . . God;* or, and tasted. The good word of God probably refers to His promises, which are consoling and inspire confidence (x. 35; Zech. i. 13).—*Powers of world to come.* Though the realizing of the promises be yet future, it is not absolutely so; the world to come projects itself in many forms into the present life, or shows its heavenly beauty and order rising up amidst the chaos of the present. This it does in the powers of the world to come, which are like laws of a new world coming in to cross and by and by to supersede those of this world. These "powers," being mainly still future, are combined with the good word of promise, and elevated into a distinct class, corresponding to the third group above, viz. resurrection and judgment (ver. 2).

Ver. 6. *If they shall fall away* . . .; or, and fell away. The whole might read: for in regard to those who were once enlightened, and tasted . . . and were made partakers . . . and tasted . . . and (then) fell away, it is impossible to renew them again, etc. The translation, *if they fall* away, is that of all the early English Versions (Tynd. Gen. etc., Rheims has: and are fallen), and there is no reason to suppose it due to any doctrinal bias. It rightly enough indicates the point

them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.
7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it
8 is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto curs-

where the hypothesis begins. Though the Apostle's language is general and spoken in a historical way, it has no relevancy unless meant to be a picture of the "Hebrews." Up to this point he has in them a real Christian history before him; beyond this point, so far at least as they are concerned, he has only a supposed case, for to prevent his supposition from becoming a reality is the earnest aim of the whole Epistle, and especially of this passage.—*Falling away* does not mean falling into sin, even grievous sin, but renouncing the faith of Christ wholly. It is called "sinning wilfully," that is, apostatizing against experience and better knowledge, in x. 26, where the history and experience described above in vers. 4, 5 is called "receiving the knowledge of the truth."

*It is impossible . . . repentance. Impossible* must not be toned down to "very difficult," nor must the edge of the expression be turned by suggesting "impossible for man;" for though it be true that in saying "impossible to renew" the Apostle has in his mind the work of himself or any Christian teacher, yet such means is God's appointed means, and so far is he from contemplating any agency or interference higher than man's, that he rather implies that to the higher agency the impossibility is due (vers. 7, 8).

*Seeing they crucify . . . afresh* gives the ground of the impossibility in general, which lies in the magnitude of the sin—crucifying as they do, being crucifiers of the Son of God. The last words bring out the heinousness of the sin; comp. x. 29, where the mental conditions implied in apostatizing from the Christian faith, especially in the case of Hebrews, are strongly brought out.—It is probable that the rendering, crucify *afresh* or again, is the right one, though the addition "to themselves" is rather in favour of simply *crucify*. To crucify again is not to do it for a second time in their history, but to do on their part what was once done before in Christ's history by others, the unbelieving Jews, with whom in their heinous deed and unbelief they associate themselves.—The shade of force in *to themselves* is difficult to catch; it may express the consciousness that accompanies the act, or possibly the effect of the act on themselves; they crucify the Son of God, thus cutting off all fellowship between themselves and Him, and destroying the possibility of benefit from Him.—*And put . . . open shame*, lit. and make a public spectacle or example of Him, as a malefactor and false Christ, deserving His ignominious death. To themselves they crucify Him, in the face of the world they make a public spectacle of Him (comp. x. 29).

Vers. 7, 8. Such persons once enlightened and then apostatizing

9 ing; whose end *is* to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany

fall under the action of a moral law having its analogy in the law of nature. The field which enjoys and uses the blessing of the frequent rain (in "drinketh in" and "oft," vers. 4, 5 are reproduced), and is fruitful, answers its end in reference to those for whose sake it is dressed, and receives the approbation of God and His blessing in that He confers increased fertility upon it; but when, though enjoying this prolonged blessing of the rain, it beareth thorns and briars (ver. 6), then it fails of its end and meets the disapprobation of the Creator, and His curse falls upon it, so that its end is to be burnt up with what it has produced.—This is the analogy between the thorn-bearing field and those who fall away, and their respective destinies. God interferes directly even in regard to the field and the processes of nature. And in like manner He interferes with His judgment in the case of those who fall away. And it is here that the impossi[bility] of the renewing them again lies. The Author's conception of the cas[e] ession this:—It is that of men once truly enlightened (vi. 4–8, x. 26, x[ii.] nces. iii. 7),—for the Hebrews spoken to are the People of God,—who a[fter] iting this knowledge renounce the faith of Christ (ii. 3, iii. 8, 12, x. 3[8] ing xii. 25, and especially vi. 4–8, x. 26–31, xii. 14–17). This sin is of su[ch] aggravation that the judgment of God inevitably falls upon it (ii. [3] of with ii. 3, iii. 12 with iv. 11, vi. 6 with vi. 8, x. 26–29), as it did o[n] Israel in the wilderness. This judgment is conceived as falling directly, and not through a judicial hardening of the mind making repentance impossible. The "hardening" (iii. 8, etc.) leads up to this sin of unbelief, it does not seem regarded as the continuing obstacle to repentance.

Vers. 9–12. **The Apostle is assured that the Hebrews are still faithful.** Startled almost by his own picture, the Apostle adopts a tone of mildness, even of affection, and expresses his conviction that the condition of the Hebrews is very different (ver. 9). This confidence is based on their past Christian activity and love through His children to the name of God, which God will not forget (ver. 10). And his earnest wish is—and this is the explanation of words that may seem severe—that every one of them might show the same diligence as they had shown in their benevolent ministry to the saints in the direction of the fulness of his own hope, and that even unto the end (ver. 11) becoming thus imitators of them who inherit the promises (ver. 12).

ver. 9. *But beloved . . . better things.* The Author nowhere else word "beloved." Alarm at the awful suggestion of his own vers. 4–8) causes a rush of affection into his heart. On see on i. 4. The "better things" may be either a better condition (than the field of thorns), or a better destiny e fire of judgment, ver. 8; comp. x. 27). The first is more , and suits better the connection, and is more in harmony with the strong reflux of the tide of affection towards them.—*Accompany salvation . . . speak*, lit. connected with salvation, and leading to it.

10 salvation, though we thus speak. For God *is* not unrighteous
to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed
toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and
11 do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show
the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

The words explain "better things." And his grave language is not to be attributed to a belief that they have fallen away, but to an earnest solicitude in their behalf (ver. 11).

Ver. 10. Their past history and public life (which is, indeed, also their present history) is guarantee to him, when he remembers God's righteousness, of their present state.—*Unrighteous . . . work and labour of love;* rather, **work and the love which . . .** The words *labour of* have probably slipped in from 1 Thess. i. 3. Their "work" is the general Christian activity of their life (1 Cor. iii. 13; 1 Thess. faith or And their love shown in ministering to the saints is called tizing the name of God, because love to those who are His children tory are called by His name, and because it is shown under the feeling the ks relation of God to those whom they ministered to.—The *saints* It be the poor believers in Palestine (2 Cor. viii. 4, ix. 1), but do34 shows that the ministry was a much wider one than mere alms-tuving, and probably believers in general are meant by the term. This ministry was not a thing of the past, it still was a symptom of things accompanying salvation among the Hebrews.

*Unrighteous to forget.* Comp. xi. 6, 26, where the first principles of faith are said to be the belief that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him, and where Moses is said to have had respect unto the recompense of reward (see xii. 2 of Jesus Himself). Men are here conceived as acting from the broad and reasonable motives from which men will act; and the relations between God and men are conceived as similar to the just relations of men among one another. The preliminary thought that it is in condescension and grace that God has entered into such relations with men, binding Himself and raising expectations in their minds, is not here before the Author.—The way in which God will remember their love is by upholding their hope and faith by grace to help in time of need (iv. 16).

Ver. 11. *We desire . . . same diligence . . .* Fully acknowledging what was praiseworthy in them, the Author desires that *every one* of them (iii. 13, iv. 1, xii. 15, 16) would show the same diligence in regard to his own Christian hope as they had shown and were showing in regard to sympathy and love to their brethren. Their public life and public spirit were exemplary, if the same steadiness and resolution only marked their inner life! Here wavering or even unconcern seemed to have begun to threaten them.—*To the full assurance . . . end;* or, **in respect to the fulness of hope . . .** end. The word is again used of faith (x. 22). Fulness or full assurance of faith and hope is not anything distinct from faith and hope, lying outside of them and

12 that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through
13 faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no

to which they may lead; it is a condition of faith and hope themselves, the perfect condition. The Author desires that they should give diligence to have their hope full, and to sustain it in this fulness unto the end (see on iii. 6).

Ver. 12. *Be not slothful;* or, **become not sluggish** (dull, v. 11).—*But followers . . . patience;* or, **imitators** (xiii. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 16) . . . **patient waiting** (comp. patiently endured or waited, ver. 15). The word "patience" is often rendered long-suffering, lit. length of mind, whether as opposed to shortness of temper or anger, or to despondency. It is here patient waiting for that which is long deferred, and is allied to hope. There is another patience (x. 36, xii. 1, and the verb, x. 32, xii. 2, 3, 7) which means patient bearing up under afflictions, and is akin to faith. The subject of the present passage to the end of the chapter is hope.—To inherit the promises is to enter into possession of the things promised, not merely to receive the verbal assurances. By them who inherit the promises is not meant those now inheriting them in heaven, but the *class* of persons, whether alive or belonging to the past, whose characteristic it is that (owing to their conduct) they are inheritors of the promises. The virtues characteristic of such persons and securing the promises are faith and patient waiting, and in these virtues the Hebrews are exhorted to imitate them, that they may take rank among them.

Vers. 13–20. **Hope may well be sustained by these promises, for they are not only promises of God, but promises of God confirmed by the oath of God.**

The passage, though it seems formally to attach itself to the last words of ver. 12, is meant to sustain the exhortation in the end of ver. 11, by showing how sure the ground of hope is. Various assumptions in the Author's mind underlie the passage. The promises are specifically the promises of God and in reference to salvation. It is characteristic of these promises that they were first made to Abraham. When given to Abraham they were accompanied with an oath (Gen. xxii. 16). This oath of God is a characteristic of them, as appears not only from Gen. xxii. 16, but from Ps. cx. 4 (comp. vi. 20, vii. 20, 21). And it is on this characteristic that stress is laid in these verses, as common to all that is to be called "the promises." The promises are a specific class of assurances from God. A single point is laid hold of among them in ver. 14, which shows their characteristic, and which is seen to have been fulfilled through the patient waiting of Abraham. But this characteristic belongs to them all, and is the assurance to us, that through patience we shall also receive fulfilment (vers. 16–20).

Ver. 13. *For when God . . . Abraham.* The promise and the oath were given at the same time: God when He promised . . . sware, Gen. xxii. 16. The preceding promises (Gen. xii. 2, xv. 5) are

14 greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will
15 bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so,
after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
16 For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for con-

not referred to, being summed up in the more explicit one.—*By no greater;* or, none greater.

Ver. 15. *And so . . . he obtained;* and in these circumstances it was—having promises made to him, assured by oath—that having exercised, or in the exercise of, patience he received fulfilment. This illustration of the fulfilment and the way it is reached is thrown in almost parenthetically, and is not the main point in the passage, which lies in the words, *God when he made promise sware*, ver. 13.—This fulfilment received by Abraham does not consist in this, that as a just man he is now made perfect (xii. 23), but in this, that the words "multiplying I will multiply thee" (ver. 14), were through his patient waiting realized, as we see (xi. 12), and as he lived to see in some measure (Gen. xxv. 7, 26). It seems fairest to limit the promise to Abraham, which he obtained by patient waiting, to these words of ver. 14, and to take the words in their simple sense, according to xi. 12, without importing any deeper Messianic meaning into them. The promises of course all belong to the same class, and they have the same characteristics.

Vers. 16–20. Proceeding now on the assumption that "the promises" all have the same characteristic of the oath, which marked them when first made to Abraham, the Author makes application to his readers.[1]

Men make use of the oath by God, and such an oath ends all gainsaying and confirms the assertion (ver. 16). And this being the state of the case among men, God condescended to interpose between Himself and men by the same oath by Himself, in order to show to them the unchangeableness of His purpose (ver. 17): that by two immutable things, God's promise and God's oath confirming His promise, we might have strong encouragement in regard to the hope set before us (ver. 18), etc.

Ver. 16. *For men . . . the greater; i.e.* the greater one. *For* takes up "sware by Himself" (ver. 13).—*And an oath . . . strife;* or, and of all gainsaying (contradiction, vii. 7, xii. 3) an oath is to them an end for confirmation, *i.e.* the oath ends gainsaying (or dispute) and confirms. When one gainsays the affirmation of another, the oath ends the contradiction and serves for confirmation. "This passage teaches us that an oath may be lawfully used by Christians. . . . For certainly

[1] Many suppose that in these verses the Author has in his mind Gen. xxii. 18, "and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," which he takes in a Messianic sense and regards as the promise made to us. But this view imports *particulars* into the text for which there is no warrant, and is quite unnecessary. The general characteristic of "the promises," the oath, illustrated when the promises were first given, and marking them all, is all that he has in mind. If any particular passage is before him, it is Ps. cx. 4; comp. vi. 19, 20.

17 firmation *is* to them an end of all strife. Wherein God,
willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise
the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:
18 that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible
for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have
fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

the Apostle speaks here of the custom of swearing as of a holy practice and approved by God. Moreover, he does not speak of it as having been formerly in use, but as of a thing still practised" (Calv.).

Ver. 17. *Wherein God willing;* or, **wherefore God wishing.** *Wherefore*, lit. in which state of the case, this being the practice among men, and an oath having this acknowledged force among them. The word refers to both clauses of ver. 16.—*Confirmed it by an oath;* rather, **interposed** or mediated **with an oath.** When men appeal to God, the greater One, they bring Him in as surety between themselves and those to whom they make promise or affirmation. In condescension to their practice, and in order to show the immutability of His purpose contained in His promise, God took this way; but being unable to appeal to a greater than Himself, He brought in Himself as surety, He mediated or came in between men and Himself, through the oath by Himself.

Ver. 18. The two immutable things are God's promise and God's oath. God is the promiser and God is the surety, brought in by the promiser.—*In which*, *i.e.* in which severally, in either of which.—*Strong consolation;* rather, **encouragement** (exhortation, xii. 5, xiii. 22). The rest of the verse may be construed in two ways, either: encouragement, *we who have fled for refuge to lay hold;* or, *encouragement*—we who have fled for refuge—*to hold fast the hope*, etc. Either sense is in harmony with the scope of the passage, which is to enforce perseverance on those who have already believed. In the one case that to which we have encouragement is left to the readers to supply; in the second, it is expressed; in either case it is the same. The second construction is rather abrupt, and the first gives the more probable sense, although in favour of the second it may be urged that it preserves the sense *hold fast* for the word already so rendered, iv. 14.—The words "fled for refuge" suggest a danger on the one side and an asylum on the other. The danger may be the corruption that is in the world, the conscience of sin (vi. 1, 4–5, ix. 9, 14, x. 2), and the impending moral entrance of God into the world to assume once for all the sceptre as King (x. 27, 30, etc., xii. 27, etc.; Isa. xl. 11; Ps. xcix.); and the asylum or protection to which they have fled is the hope set or lying before them, that is, the promises and their fulfilment (ver. 13; comp. x. 23). Though the passage began by speaking of hope as a state of the mind (ver. 11), here the hope seems rather the external object of hope. If the construction "encouragement to hold fast the hope" be adopted, the hope may be subjective, but against this is the phrase "set before us."

19 which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and
stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;
20 whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an
High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Ver. 19. This verse may be read as in the English Version, or thus: **which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast**, etc. On this construction the comparison with the anchor would be brief and confined to the first clause, the subject hope being then resumed and described by the epithets "sure," etc. The figure of an anchor entering within the veil is rather incongruous, and when it is said that "the iron anchor of the seaman is cast downwards into the deep of the sea; but the hope-anchor of the Christian is thrown upwards into the deep of heaven, and passing through the super-celestial waters, finds its ground and fast-holding *there*" (Delitzsch), the figure becomes grotesque. But the grotesqueness arises from pressing the figure; and the adjectives sure (not failing), stedfast (fast), seem suggested by the idea of the anchor. The anchor answers either to the subjective or the external hope. In the one case the anchor is something thrown out and thrown into the part within the veil, holding us safely who are yet outside, afflicted and tossed with tempest. On the other hand, if "hope" be the object of hope, the idea that the anchor is thrown out by us is wanting, and the only thought is that we are moored to an immoveable object. The three epithets "sure," "stedfast," and "entering," all go together, and the two first depend on the third—the anchor or hope is sure and stedfast mainly because entering within the veil, though comp. ver. 18. The last expression is explained by ver. 20.

Ver. 20. *Whither the forerunner . . . made an High Priest;* or, **a forerunner . . . having become an High Priest** (*i.e.* on entering); or in a slightly different way, **whither as forerunner for us Jesus entered, becoming an High Priest** (*i.e.* when He entered). Our hope is sure and stedfast because it enters within the veil, and it enters within the veil because it rests on the Melchisedec priesthood of Jesus, who exercises His priesthood there. This is true whether the hope be internal or external. The object of hope is the inheritance set forth in the promises. The Christian hope fastens on this. Either hope rests on the promise guaranteed by the oath. But hope rests also on the fact which is the means to the fulfilment of the promise, the Melchisedec ministry of the Son. Jesus is entered into that which is within the veil, having obtained eternal redemption (ix. 12), and for this cause He is the mediator of a new covenant that they which have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance (ix. 15). Our hope enters there with Him, and holds us secure; He is forerunner whom we shall follow where the inheritance lies.—The literary skill of the Author is very remarkable in bringing round his practical exhortation to the point from which it started (v. 10), now to be taken up formally in chap. vii.; equally conspicuous is his practical insight in connecting the slackness of the Hebrews in

regard to Hope, the great Christian virtue, with their imperfect conceptions of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ, the cardinal Christian doctrine.

Chap. vii. 1–28. **Jesus a Priest, a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.**

The Author having at the end of his practical digression, chap. v. 11–vi. 20, again reached the point from which his digression started, now enters upon that point in detail, Christ's Melchisedec priesthood. There is no difference in principle between priesthood and high priesthood. Melchisedec is spoken of as a priest in the Old Testament, and this language is followed when the person of the priest out of which his priesthood arises is treated of, vii. 1–25, but when his offering is referred to he is called a high priest, vii. 26–28. The Son is not merely a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, He is a High Priest after that order, v. 10, vi. 20; and His ministry as Melchisedec High Priest corresponds to the ministry of the Levitical high priest. The functions of priest and high priest are the same in principle, but are related as the divisions in the Tabernacle, the holy place and holy of holies, are related to one another, or as the outer and inner of two circles, the common centre of which is the place of God's throne.

The dispensation or economy being a covenant, the high priest is the central figure in it (see Note on the Covenants). The dispensation is virtually a priesthood (vii. 11). Hence the importance of the "order" of the priest. Order or kind has reference not to the ministry or acts of service of the priest or high priest, for this is the same essentially in all priesthoods of whatever order, but to the person or *personnel* of the priesthood (Note on the Priesthood). The Melchisedec high priest performs the same part in the new covenant that the Levitical does in the first,—he ministers in a sanctuary, he presents an offering, and he appears before God and realizes in himself, as representing the People, a covenant relation. Hence, when the first covenant and the new are brought into contrast, the cleanest antithesis that can be put is that of priest to priest—the new covenant is to the first as the Melchisedec high priest is to the Levitical. The Melchisedec priest is described somewhat generally in vii. 1-9, and it might be supposed that a number of features enter into his order. There can be little doubt, however, that the one point mainly in the Apostle's mind is presented in the often recurring sentence, *A priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* The one clause in this statement is equivalent to the other: to be a priest for ever is to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec. This is really the point of importance, because this "for ever" of the priesthood is the seal and guarantee of the finality of his priestly acts as sanctifying for ever the People (x. 10), and of the eternity of the covenant (vii. 22), and this last is the fundamental idea of the Epistle. "Royalty" belongs to him who is priest, but is not the note or characteristic of his priesthood. This "for ever"

VII. 1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of 2 the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of

belongs to the Melchisedec high priest in virtue of his indissoluble life (vii. 16, vii. 3, 8), and this again he has as the Son of God (vii. 3). So that the order of his priesthood resolves itself into the nature of his person (comp. vii. 6). In like manner, on the other hand, the Apostle seeks to convey what he means by the order of Aaron by using the word "of flesh" (vii. 16), *i.e.* mortal, and by saying that the Aaronic or Levitical priests are "men that die" (vii. 8).

Vers. 1–10. **Melchisedec himself, containing two points: 1. Melchisedec abideth a priest continually, vers. 1–3; 2. His greatness and superiority to the Levitical priests, vers. 4–10.**

Vers. 1–3. The statement here is, This Melchisedec . . . abideth a priest continually. This is the point in Melchisedec's priesthood. This point arises out of what Melchisedec is in himself,—in other words, his priesthood arises directly out of his person, and no distinction is drawn between him as a person and as a priest. The connection by *for* is with the last words of chap. vi.—a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.—The words, *king of Salem . . . a tenth part of all*, recite the historical facts regarding Melchisedec, or run over the features of the picture drawn in Gen. xiv.; and the words, *first being by interpretation . . . Son of God*, analyze this history in its religious and predictive meaning, drawing attention not only to the positive statements, but also to the omissions, the latter being of no less importance. Finally, the subject, "this Melchisedec," being loaded with these successive characteristics one after the other, and thus bearing them all, is affirmed to abide a priest continually.

**The history**, vers. 1, 2.—*King of Salem.* It is probable that the Author regarded Salem as Jerusalem, Ps. lxxvi. 2, and this is not unlikely to have been the seat of Melchisedec's rule. Others think of Salem on the Jordan, John iii. 23. Nothing depends upon the locality; it is the meaning of the word, "peace," that gives importance to the name (ver. 2).—*The most high God;* or, **God most high.** The words are not used in a comparative sense to mean the highest of gods, but, God the supreme (Mark v. 7; comp. Gen. xiv. 22).

**Analysis of the history**, vers. 2, 3.—*By interpretation.* The word Melchisedec means king of righteousness. "Righteousness" is in the Old Testament prophecies the fundamental characteristic of the Messiah and His kingdom; comp. Ps. lxxii. 1, 2; Isa. ix. 7, xxxii. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; and also of His people, whom He makes righteous, Isa. liii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 6; Dan. ix. 24 (1 Cor. i. 30). This righteousness of the priest himself may be taken up in the epithets, chap. vii. 26; comp. ver. 28.—*And after this also;* or, **and then also king** . . . of peace. The immediate consequence of the righteousness

righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is,
3 King of peace; without father, without mother, without
descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;

of the Messiah and His kingdom is stated to be peace, Ps. lxxii. 3, 7; sa. ix. 5; Zech. ix. 9 (comp. Rom. v. 1; Eph. ii. 4, 15). The "peace" of the Melchisedec priest may be referred to in "separated rom sinners," ver. 26.

Ver. 3. *Without father . . . without descent;* rather, **without** genealogy, or register of descent. The two preceding characteristics ndicate that Melchisedec was king as well as priest, and that he nd his kingdom were righteous (chap. i. 8, 9) and peaceful. These haracteristics now introduced refer to the person of the priest. They are mentioned in opposition to the things required of the Levitical priest, in whose case everything depended upon his belonging to a certain family. The Levite must be able to trace his genealogy (see Neh. vii. 63, etc.), and his descent must be pure on both sides. It is characteristic of Melchisedec that he belongs to no priestly family. On such a connection Scripture is silent; his priesthood is independent of father or mother or genealogical egister. The words do not mean that Melchisedec came into xistence having no father and no mother, but that in the picture resented of him in Scripture, he stands unconnected with any amily, and yet a priest.

*Beginning of days or end of life.* These words also refer to the icture in Gen. xiv. No history of his birth is given, nor any of his leath, as is usual in Scripture, and the omission is significant. In egard to the words "without father," etc., it might be true in fact hat as a priest Melchisedec had no progenitor; his priesthood might elong to himself, being exercised in virtue of his high place among is people. If he followed another who was priest, his priesthood vould not be the same, but one belonging to himself. But questions of what the facts were ought not here to be raised. There is ertainly great temptation to go behind the Scripture picture and to eek a basis of facts for the several traits of the description. The ttempt, however, only introduces confusion, as the words *without eginning of days*, etc. show. These words must mean, of whom o beginning of days is recorded. Otherwise Melchisedec becomes nagnified into a supernatural being, contrary to the plain scope of Gen. xiv.—*But made like unto the Son of God, i.e.* in this particular, hat he had neither beginning of days nor end of life. The clause s connected only with the preceding, not with the words *without father*, etc. The Son of God is spoken of here as the Epistle repreents Him, existing from eternity, ix. 14, i. 2, and living for ever, 10–12. Such a comparison is decisive against attributing these haracteristics to Melchisedec in a real sense. They belong to the ortrait of him, which was so drawn that he was "made like" the Son of God,—that by the features absent as well as by the positive raits a figure should appear corresponding to the Son of God, and

but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest con
4 tinually. Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom
even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils

suited to suggest Him.—The characteristics above mentioned mov inward to a centre. First, the terms "King of righteousness," etc describe the priesthood as royal, and the kingdom as one c righteousness. Second, the words "without father," etc. indicat that the priesthood is inherent in the personality, and dependen on it alone. And third, the phrase "having neither beginning c days," etc. expresses what kind of personality this is out of whic the priesthood arises; it is one of which the characteristic is a indissoluble life (vii. 16).

*Abideth a priest continually*, closely connected with the precedin clause, out of which it springs (ver. 25)—the priesthood is continuou because the priest is one having neither beginning of days nor en of life. The statement "abideth a priest continually" expresse the real point of the Melchisedec priesthood. The other trai touched upon, except in so far as they support or explain this poin are only accessories. They may belong to the Melchisedec pries in fact, but they are not essential, and might conceivably be abse without derogating from his Melchisedec priesthood. This applic to the royalty of the priest; it is an accompaniment of the pries hood, but not strictly its characteristic, which consists in the pries being a priest for ever, v. 10, vi. 20, vii. 3, 8, 16, 17, 20, 24, 25, 2 He is such a high priest as sat down at the right hand of Go viii. 1, x. 12. These passages indicate both the finality of His sacr fice and the great dignity to which he has been raised; but th great dignity is not the essential characteristic of his priesthoo it is an additional characteristic of the person who is Melchisede priest because he is priest for ever.—As we see Melchisedec in th picture of him which is a prophetic copy of another, he is a pries continually. Like a portrait he is always the same; he follows about with his eyes, a king and a priest, always alone, with n ancestry of priesthood before him, and none succeeding to h priesthood after him, always living—so Scripture shows him, an so continually in its pages we behold him.

Vers. 4–10. **Greatness of Melchisedec as a priest and superiority the Levitical priests.**

1. This greatness and superiority are inferred from the tw priestly actions performed by Melchisedec in relation to Abraham (1) he took tithes of Abraham; and (2) he gave Abraham h priestly benediction. The two points emphasized in connection wi these actions are—first, that Melchisedec, belonging to no priest caste entitled by law to tithe, but acting in virtue entirely of wh he was personally, took tithes and blessed; and second, that h acted thus not in regard to common Israelites, but to Abraham, th Patriarch, him who had the promises, whom such a halo of glo surrounded. Superior to Abraham, Melchisedec is much mo

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the
office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes
of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren,
6 though they come out of the loins of Abraham: but he
whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of
7 Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And
without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.
8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth*

superior to the Levitical priests, vers. 5–7. 2. A second point of superiority is this, that the Levitical priests are men that die; Melchisedec is witnessed to that he liveth, ver. 8. And 3. to bring the Levitical priests and Melchisedec together, Levi may be said to have acknowledged the superiority, for being unborn, he, so to speak, paid tithes in his father Abraham, vers. 9, 10.

Vers. 5–7. *And verily . . . priesthood;* or, **and they indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood.** A certain dignity and pre-eminence is conceded to the Levitical priests. They have a privilege above other Israelites, who in common with them are descendants of Abraham, a privilege conferred by law, entitling them to tax others, who but for this law are on a level with them. But Melchisedec's superiority appears here, that not belonging to this priestly caste, and thus acting under no law, but in virtue of his personal position, he took tithes; and in addition he did this not of the descendants of Abraham, but of Abraham himself, the Patriarch.—*And blessed . . . promises.* Besides tithing Abraham, he blessed him as a priest, him who had the promises, and thus showed that Abraham was the "less," and he the "better," *i.e.* better in an official sense. He that blesses is higher than he is whom he blesses. Melchisedec was perhaps not a better or greater man than Abraham, but as a priest he took upon him to stand between God and Abraham, and on God's behalf blessed Abraham, the head and fount of Israel, and of the renown that surrounds it, himself the friend of God and having the promises, which, centering in him, raised him to an exceeding height of greatness in redemptive history. But Melchisedec has in this history a higher place. And thus Melchisedec's priesthood is superior to that of the Levites,—first, by as much as personal worth is higher than privilege conferred by mere legal formula; and second, by as much as Abraham stands above his ordinary descendants.—In the history, Gen. xiv., Melchisedec brings forth to Abraham bread and wine. This is not alluded to in the Epistle. The Author did not regard this as a priestly act, but probably as one of ordinary hospitality. Those who bring it in under the typology do so on their own responsibility.

Ver. 8. Another aspect of the superiority of Melchisedec.—*Here men that die . . . liveth.* The Levitical priests are mortal men. Melchisedec is borne witness to that he liveth. No express testimony

9 *them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And, as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in

of this kind is found, but it is virtually contained in the silence o Scripture regarding his death, and in the picture of him as living which the Author interprets to mean "that he had neither beginning of days nor end of life," ver. 3. Here all that the Author has in view is the point of superiority: Melchisedec liveth, the Levitical priests are mortal men. The consequences of this superiority are alluded to later, ver. 25. Their priesthood belongs to them as a body, and they retain it but for a time; his is wholly his own, and he retains it always.

Vers. 9, 10. Levi may be said to have directly acknowledged the superiority of Melchisedec, for being in the loins of Abraham he so to speak paid tithes to him.—In these verses, 4–10, the Apostle gives a summary of the points in his view significant in the Melchisedec priesthood, giving it superiority to the Aaronic or Levitical. He lays hold of two points: that Melchisedec exercised his priestly function of tithing and blessing not in virtue of belonging to a priestly family empowered by law to exercise the priesthood, but in virtue of what he was in himself as a person; and that he liveth. The Levitical priests are so in virtue of a mere law, not from any personal superiority to their brethren; and they are men that die. These points both touch the person of the priest, and have no reference to ministry in itself and this shows what the Epistle means by "order" of priesthood. Further, the royalty of the priest is not alluded to in this summary.

Vers. 11–28. **Jesus the Melchisedec Priest and High Priest.**

**Connection.**—The Apostle finding in Ps. cx. 4 the words, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," went to the history Gen. xiv. to discover what the order or kind of Melchisedec's priesthood was. This he drew out in detail, vers. 1–10. There he was moving among principles exclusively, and showing from the history of Melchisedec himself what the nature of his priesthood was. Now he comes to the priest after the order of Melchisedec. This priest has arisen, and the following verses exhibit what is implied in the *fact* of the introduction of such a priest not after the order of Aaron (vers. 11–19), in the *manner* of his introduction (vers. 20, 21), and in the *nature* of such a priest (ver. 23, etc.). The Author reasons on the prediction Ps. cx. 4, not however in an abstract way, but regarding it as having received historical fulfilment in Jesus, the Son of God.

**Outline.**—1. The fact of the bringing in of a higher priest has profound meaning and consequences. The introduction of any priest "not after the order of Aaron" is an alteration of the Law, which was given upon the basis of the Levitical priesthood. And this alteration is seen, for in our Lord the priesthood has passed from Levi to Judah a tribe in reference to which nothing is said in the legislation of Moses concerning priests, vers. 11–14.

10 Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father when

The change of priesthood from one tribe to another, however, though a change in the facts, might have left the principle still unaltered. The profound effects of the change of priesthood are more abundantly evident if the positive side of the prophecy and the fulfilment be considered—"after the order of Melchisedec." Here is the bringing in of a new principle. The Levitical priesthood was according to a commandment having reference to fleshy descent and bodily characteristics, and regulating the succession of mortal men; the new priesthood is after the power of an endless life, vers. 15–17.

In a word, there is in that prediction, now fulfilled, the disannulling of a commandment which was merely provisional, viz. the old Law, which in all points failed to effect its true purpose; and there is the bringing in upon it of a better hope, a priesthood which makes perfect, *i.e.* removes sins and enables us to draw near in service unto God, vers. 18, 19.

2. Further, if the manner in which the Melchisedec priest is introduced, as seen in the prophecy now fulfilled in Jesus, be considered, the profound meaning of the new priesthood will appear. He was made priest with the swearing of an oath. The oath introduces something final and unchangeable (vi. 17, 18). Made priest with an oath, the priesthood of Jesus is unchangeable, and in virtue of this He is the surety to us of an eternal covenant, vers. 20–22.

3. Again, this priesthood not only enables us to draw near unto God, truly removing the conscience of sins (ver. 19, ix. 14), or in other words making us the people of the new eternal covenant (vers. 20–22, viii. 10–12), but secures salvation to the uttermost to them that thus draw near (ver. 25), helping them out of all their temptations (ii. 18, iv. 16), and enabling them to hold fast their hope unto the end (iii. 6, x. 23), seeing the Priest is One who ever liveth to make intercession for them, vers. 23–25.

4. Outburst of gladness called forth by the thought of the Melchisedec High Priest just described, so lofty in His moral attributes, being the Son made perfect; so transcendent in the sphere where His high priesthood is exercised; and consequently so efficacious in the great act of His Melchisedec high priesthood, His offering of Himself once for all to make atonement for the sins of the people, vers. 26–28.

Vers. 11–19. **The meaning and consequences of the fact of the introduction of a priest not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec.**

11 Melchisedec met him. If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the

The meaning of the appearance of Jesus the Melchisedec Priest is stated explicitly in vers. 18, 19. It has two sides: it is first the setting aside of the Levitical priesthood and legislation; and second, it is the bringing in upon it of a better hope, whereby we in truth draw near unto God. To make this statement is the purpose of the passage vers. 11–19, and not to argue that perfection is not by the Levitical priesthood. This last is a subordinate point, which is even thrown into a parenthesis, ver. 19. In drawing attention to the meaning and consequences of the fact of a Melchisedec priest arising, the Author reasons not on the abstract prophecy Ps. cx. 4, but on that prophecy as historically fulfilled in Jesus. The passage is a little intricate, but seems to run somewhat as follows:—A prediction of a priest after the order of Melchisedec has been made, and the prediction has been fulfilled in the history of Jesus. If now perfection was by the Levitical priesthood—and Levitical priesthood means the whole Law, for on the basis of it the people received the Law—what need further was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For not without stringent necessity would such a change of priesthood take place, considering its important consequences. For when the priesthood is changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law, as we see, for it is evident that Jesus has sprung of the tribe of Judah, of which nothing is said in the Law of Moses in regard to priests (11–15). And if the introduction of a priest not of the order of Aaron have this consequence for the Law, much more evidently has the introduction of a priest after the order of Melchisedec, etc.

Ver. 11. *If therefore perfection . . .* ; lit. **now, indeed, if perfection was . . .** The passage assumes the fact of the rise of a priest not after the order of Aaron, and proceeds to exhibit its meaning and consequences.—*Perfection* is always a relative word. An institution brings perfection when it effects the purpose for which it was instituted, and produces a result that corresponds to the idea of it. The design of a priesthood is to bring men near to God (ver. 19), and this it effects by removing the obstacle in the way, viz. men's sin, which lying on their conscience impedes their free access to God; comp. ix. 9, x. 1, 14.—*For under it . . . the Law;* lit. **for upon it . . .** The priesthood is the basis of the legislation, it is the central and regulating idea of the Law. The Law is the Law of Moses as a whole. The Author conceives the economy, whether of the first or second covenant, as virtually a priesthood.—*What further need . . . Aaron?* There could have been no need of a different priesthood if perfection had been by the Levitical. That a different priest has arisen the prediction and facts show. This is sufficient proof of the failure of the Levitical. —The clause, *and not be called after the order of Aaron*, is the

12 order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there
13 is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of
14 which no man gave attendance at the altar. For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses
15 spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more

Author's own, and is designed to indicate the meaning of *after the order of Melchisedec* by holding up to view first the negative side of the prediction and its effects. This negative side is expanded in vers. 12–14, and the positive side, "after the order of Melchisedec," in vers. 15–17.

Ver. 12. *For the priesthood . . . also of the Law*, lit. **when the priesthood is being changed**, there happens, etc. The priesthood is virtually the Law. The verse is intended to bring into light what is involved in a change of priesthood, and serves as a kind of justification of the question of the preceding verse—what need was there . . . for only stringent necessity could justify a change of priesthood, seeing it is in fact no less a thing than a change of the Law.

Vers. 13, 14. *For he of whom . . . altar.* He of whom these things are spoken, *i.e.* the prophecy Ps. cx. 4, is Jesus. The words "pertaineth to," lit. **hath partaken of**, indicate that here at least the Author has descended into the region of fulfilment, and is no more moving among the abstract principles of the prophecy. But in point of fact he seems to combine the prediction with its fulfilment from ver. 11 onward, and the words "should rise" (ver. 11) and "being changed" (ver. 12) are spoken of the history of Jesus, and not of the abstract contents of the prediction.—This change of the Law (ver. 12) is seen, for Jesus, as all know, belongs to the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests.[1]

Vers. 15–17. More decisive evidence that the change of priesthood is a change of the Law, from the kind of priesthood introduced—"after the order of Melchisedec." This is not a mere transference of the priesthood from one tribe to another, but a change in the principle of the law of the priesthood.—*And it is yet far more evident;* or, **and this change of the Law is yet more abundantly evident.** In ver. 14 "evident" means manifest from facts, here "evident" (a different word) means conclusive in the way of inference. The *it* which is more abundantly evident is not that perfection is not by the Levitical priesthood (ver. 11), but the change of the Law implied in the change of priesthood (ver. 12). The whole passage illustrates the meaning of the bringing in of such a priest as Jesus. Such a priest would not have arisen if perfection had been by the Levitical priesthood, for the rise of such a priest has consequences no less profound than a change of the whole Law. This change of the Law is seen in fact, for Jesus belongs to the tribe of Judah, not Levi (13, 14). But it is more abundantly seen when the positive side of the prediction, now

[1] *Priests* and not *priesthood* is the reading of the better MSS.

evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there
16 ariseth another Priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

fulfilled, is considered, for the Melchisedec priesthood is one founded on a new principle.—*For that after the similitude;* lit. if (as is the case) after the similitude, etc. The term similitude explains what is meant by "order." It is likeness or manner, and has reference to the person of the priest.

Vers. 13, 14, which expand "not after the order of Aaron," show that the origin of our Lord from the tribe of Judah excludes Him from the order of Aaron. To be of the order of Aaron one must be of the tribe of Levi. Our Lord cannot have been at any time, even if He was a priest on earth, a priest after the order of Aaron. He is not of the order of Aaron from the mere fact that He belongs to the tribe of Judah, but much more is He not of the order of Aaron when He is of the order of Melchisedec. This order is explained in the next verse.

Ver. 16. *Who is made not after . . .* ; rather, who hath become priest not after . . . The verse contrasts the principle of the Aaronic priesthood with that of the Melchisedec priesthood; the Levitical priest becomes priest according to the law of a carnal commandment, the Melchisedec priest according to the power of an endless life. The first contrast here is: the Levitical or Aaronic priest is made priest according to a law; the Melchisedec priest becomes priest according to a power. An influence or regulation outside of the one makes him priest, and he is a priest of a kind corresponding to this external law; a power inherent in the other makes him priest, and his priesthood corresponds to this power. Further, the law which makes the one priest is a law which is a carnal, lit. fleshen, commandment, *i.e.* a commandment which, moving entirely in the region of the flesh, may itself be said to be of flesh. The Law of the Aaronic priesthood had reference to descent from a particular tribe, to bodily conditions, to marriage, in a word to "flesh," a word which expresses all that which is mortal and perishable. A priesthood created and exercised under such a fleshen commandment can have no effects outside of the principle which regulates it; it can never extend its influence into the region of spirit and life. The power out of which the Melchisedec priesthood arises and according to which it is exercised, is the power belonging to an endless, lit. indissoluble, life. What is meant by this indissoluble life? The Son as pre-existing and as manifest in the flesh is the same Being, and the expression might describe His life which He has as eternal Son of God, without reference to His incarnate condition. Unquestionably that which enables the Son to be Messianic King and High Priest of men is His rank as Son. But it is true on the other hand that it is as Son come in the flesh that He is King and Priest. And the expression "hath become priest" (ver. 16) points to a historical event. It is therefore probable that indissoluble life is attributed to Him not in general as the eternal Son, but as the Son made man. The life that is called indissoluble

17 For he testifieth, Thou *art* a Priest for ever after the order of
18 Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the com-
mandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness
19 thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing

is the life which He had when He came in the flesh. Now this might be called indissoluble, because though He suffered death, His life re-asserted itself after death. If this were the meaning, the Son might be considered to have become priest in the days of His flesh, and His priesthood even then to be according to the power of an indissoluble life, because this life, His life as Son made man, though interrupted for a moment, again re-asserted itself, and this life enabled Him as the full living Christ to initiate His offering by laying Himself on the Cross, and again as the full living Christ to complete His offering in the sanctuary on high. This view is held by some of the most thoughtful writers on the Epistle. The general language of this chapter, however (comp. v. 26–28), and of the whole Epistle, is to the effect that the Son *became* priest when He performed His priestly offices. (See Note to chap. vii.) The term "indissoluble" certainly contains an allusion to His death, and it is used either to point out that His death was no dissolution of His life, or to indicate that such an event is not again possible in the life to which He has attained (comp. ix. 25–28), and according to the power of which He has become priest. The latter sense seems to say too little. The life which is indissoluble is not His existence as eternal Son, but His life as Son come in the flesh; it is that life as He possessed it in the days of His flesh, called indissoluble because it rose above death, to which for a moment it was subjected, not merely that life as it now is, when death can no more affect it (see on ix. 14). According to the power of this life He hath become priest, and exercises His priesthood. The Author's way of speaking requires some definite point for the commencement of the Son's priesthood. He connects inseparably priesthood with sanctuary, the sphere where it is exercised, and the acts done in the sanctuary exhaust priesthood. In his way of expressing himself, priesthood and the exercise of it in the sanctuary are the same thing, and consequently the Son's entry upon the exercise of His priesthood in the sanctuary on high is regarded as the commencement of it (v. 10). No doubt the high priest of old was a priest before he made his offering on the day of atonement. But the Apostle does not touch upon any point in the Son's history between His death and His entering into the sanctuary above. His typology connects these two things immediately together. The Son's entering into the sanctuary on high occupies the same place in his system that the Resurrection does in that of St. Paul. —The use made of Ps. cx. 4 in ver. 17 seems in favour of the view just stated.[1]

Vers. 18, 19. These verses sum up the preceding verses, 11–17, and express finally the meaning of the Melchisedec priesthood

[1] Instead of "for he testifieth," the better reading is, *for he is borne witness to.*

in of a better hope *did:* by the which we draw nigh unto
20 God. And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made*

both in itself (ver. 19) and in its effects on Mosaic law (ver. 18). The verses should read as follows: **For there is verily a disannulling of a foregoing commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof (for the law made nothing perfect), and (there is) a bringing in upon it of a better hope, through which we draw near unto God.** — In that prophecy of Ps. cx. 4, now fulfilled in Jesus, there are two things contained: in the introduction of a priest differing from Aaron there is a disannulling of a foregoing or provisional commandment on account of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect,—realized its idea in no respect); and second, in the introduction of a priest after the order of Melchisedec there is a bringing in upon it, *i.e.* on the back of the foregoing law (comp. "after the law," ver. 28) of a better hope, a priesthood inspiring better hopes than the priesthood of the law did (vi. 18, etc.), by which we indeed draw near unto God. The purpose of a priesthood is to bring men near unto God; when it does so perfection is through it (ver. 11); this the priesthood of Christ effects, x. 19, etc.

The term *foregoing* applied to the Mosaic law of priesthood implies that it was provisional; and bringing in upon it of another priesthood inspiring better hopes, implies that the other supersedes it.—The terms "weakness" and "uselessness" applied to the law of Levitical priesthood are very strong. St. Paul also calls the law weak (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9), and like this Apostle he ascribes its weakness to the flesh. But the two use law in different senses, and flesh in different senses, and the weakness arises from a different cause. In St. Paul "law" and "flesh" are both moral terms, and the law is unable to condemn sin on account of the flesh. In this Epistle the law is the commandment of the priesthood, and the flesh is the physical descent, bodily conditions and mortal lives, to which it has reference; and the weakness of the law is inherent in itself because it has reference to such things. In St. Paul the law which is holy and good in itself is something to be obeyed, and it is without power to produce righteousness, because the carnal mind cannot be subject to it. In this Epistle the law is not a commandment to be obeyed by man, obedience to which is righteousness, but an institution designed to effect atonement for men's sins; and it is unable to accomplish this from its own inherent weakness, because it has reference only to the flesh, and does not apply to the conscience, ix. 9, 10, 13, 14, x. 2.

Vers. 20–22. **The manner in which the Melchisedec priesthood is introduced shows that it is the priesthood of an eternal covenant.**

From the terms of the prophecy, now fulfilled, the Author passes to the circumstances accompanying the giving of it. These also are full of meaning. The oath that accompanies it reveals its eternal nature, and the change by it from the temporary to the eternal cove-

21 *Priest;* (for those priests were made without an oath; but
this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware
and will not repent, Thou *art* a Priest for ever after the order
22 of Melchisedec:) by so much was Jesus made a surety of a
23 better testament. And they truly were many priests, because
24 they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but
this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable

nant (xiii. 20). This is the meaning of the oath (vi. 18, etc.).—Without the parenthesis the verse reads: *And inasmuch as not without the swearing of an oath* he was made priest[1] . . . *by so much has Jesus become the surety of a better* covenant, *i.e.* of a covenant by so much better has He become the surety. The Old Testament priesthood was appointed without an oath, the Melchisedec priest with an oath. The oath indicates the introduction of something unchangeable. The want of it characterizes the Old Testament priesthood as provisional. The priesthood and the covenant correspond. Being made priest with an oath, Jesus becomes thereby the surety of a covenant as much better than the first as a priesthood instituted by the swearing of an oath excels one without an oath. As the covenant depends on the priesthood, Jesus, the eternal Priest, becomes the surety of an eternal covenant. The word "surety" does not occur elsewhere. It means a guarantor and upholder to us. The Son is this as the eternally living High Priest. The idea of a guarantor for us to God does not belong to the connection here. —Formally all that the swearing of the oath implies in the covenant is its finality and eternity, but the final covenant naturally has all the meaning and contents ascribed to it in viii. 10, etc., ix. 15, etc.

Vers. 23–25. **Such a High Priest secures complete salvation to those whom his sacrifice has made the new covenant people.**

These verses refer to the internal salvation of the individuals. In vers. 18, 19, Christ's priesthood was described as enabling men to draw near unto God; comp. x. 19. In vers. 20–22 it was said that such a priest was a surety of a better, an eternal covenant. Now in vers. 23–25 is described the power of the priest in respect of those whom he has enabled to draw near unto God, and made the people of the new covenant—He is able to save them unto the uttermost.—*And they . . . were many priests;* or, **have been made priests many** (*i.e.* in numbers). The Old Testament priesthood was a succession of priests, because they were mortal, and could not continue in life or in their priesthood by reason of death.

Ver. 24. *But this man . . . unchangeable priesthood;* or, **but he . . . has his priesthood unchangeable.** The Old Testament priest being mortal, was not suffered to remain, and his priesthood passed to another, or was entered upon by another: *He*, because He abideth

[1] These words are supplied by the English Version from ver. 21. Others prefer to supply *this was done*, *i.e.* the bringing in of a better hope from ver. 19. The sense remains the same.

25 priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth

in life for ever, has His priesthood of such a kind that He cannot overstep it, or of such a kind that another cannot step into it.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore . . . to save them to the uttermost;* or, to save to the uttermost them that draw near. The word "uttermost" does not refer to time, to generation after generation,—such an idea, though true in itself, could not occur here,—but to degree or perfection of salvation. The offering of Christ enables men to draw near unto God; those that thus draw near He is able to save completely, to bring them through all hindrances to that honour and glory designed for them (ii. 7, 10), which He Himself has reached as the Captain of their salvation (ii. 9, 10, v. 7–9).—*Seeing . . . to make intercession*—through His intercession they receive help in their temptations (ii. 18, iv. 16), and are enabled to hold fast their faith unto the end (iii. 6, x. 23); and thus through all vicissitudes, by patient endurance, they are saved to the uttermost, and inherit the promises.

With regard to this intercession of the Son it may be said, that of course it is not to be understood as made through words. Again, it is not to be confounded with His offering of Himself in the heavenly sanctuary. This He did once for all and without repetition (ix. 26, 27, x. 18); His intercession is continued. Neither is His intercession merely His appearance and constant presence before the face of God for us (ix. 24), as if God, having Him ever in His sight, were held in unbroken remembrance of His work for men, and had in Him, who was tempted in all points like as we are, continually before His eyes a type and representative of His people upon the earth, and was thus for ever appealed to in a double way. The intercession is regarded rather as a direct representation to God on the part of the Son. Immediately connected with it seems to be that we draw near unto God through Him (comp. vii. 25 with x. 19 and 21), and that through Him we offer the sacrifice of praise unto God continually (xiii. 15). That which will enable Him to make it pointed on our behalf is His fellow-feeling with us (iv. 14–v. 10); that which will give it power with God may be His having offered Himself, and that He is the Son of God; and that which is the effect of it is grace to help in time of need (iv. 14). To define it in itself may be impossible. He has left us an example (John xvii.) how He interceded in human speech to God in the days of His flesh, and translating this into the modes of heavenly communion, so far as we can imagine them, we may form some conception of it.

Vers. 26–28. **Summary of the whole character and ministry of the Melchisedec High Priest.**

In this summary (1) His fitness for the office of High Priest both in character and in the sphere of His existence is extolled (ver. 26); (2) His ministry is contrasted with that of the Levitical high priest (ver. 27); and (3) this contrast is explained by a reference to the

26 to make intercession for them. For such an High Priest became us, *who* is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from

difference of their person, when appointed high priests respectively (ver. 28).

The passage is of the nature of a triumphant exclamation, in which epithets are heaped on epithets, describing the lofty moral characteristics and the transcendent sphere of existence of the Melchisedec High Priest, and the consequent perfection of His high-priestly work. The allusion to His ministry is a summary of what is more fully expanded in viii. 1–6 and ix. 1–14. Because the ministry is now alluded to, and attention no longer directed exclusively to His person, the Son is called a High Priest. Priest and high priest do not differ in their person, out of which arises the kind of priest they are, but they differ as to their ministry. The Son's ministry is distinctively high-priestly, He is an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, v. 10, vi. 20.

Ver. 26. *For such . . . became us.* The early English Versions translate: for such an High Priest it became us to have. He suited our necessities and condition. *Such* seems to refer to the Melchisedec character delineated in the preceding part of the chapter, or to all that was said of the nature and character of the Son from iv. 14 onward. The sense will not differ if it be supposed to refer to the epithets and statements that follow, for these but summarize what went before.—*Holy* expresses the condition of the Son's mind toward God, He is godly (Ps. xvi. 10). The word is not the usual "holy" (iii. 1), meaning consecrated to God; it is a moral epithet. This comprehensive term embraces qualities mentioned in various places in the Epistle, *e.g.* godly fear (v. 7), humility towards God (v. 5), obedience (v. 8, x. 5–7), faith and patient endurance (xii. 2, etc.), and faithfulness (ii. 17, iii. 2).—*Harmless* describes not conduct so much as disposition — He is without evil feeling towards men. Positively, this is expressed in His compassion (ii. 17), His sympathy with our sinless infirmities (iv. 14, etc.), and, by inference from the case of the ordinary high priest, in His "metriopathy" or bearing gently with us even when erring and out of the way (v. 2). Having been the Captain of salvation (ii. 10), every heroic deed of men will attract His eye and move His mind.—*Undefiled* refers to His official condition—having no stain or defilement unfitting Him for His priestly functions, Lev. xvi. 4. All these epithets might have been applied to the Son on earth, though said of Him here in respect of His exalted condition. The following words are applicable exclusively to His condition on high.—*Separated from sinners*, lifted out from among men and withdrawn from them, and therefore no more liable to be disturbed or affected by their influence. The word is wrongly translated *separate*—it describes a historical occurrence which introduced an abiding state. Comp. Lev. xxi. 10, etc.—*Made higher than the heavens*, removed out of the sphere of that which is created, and elevated into the communion of God, where nothing

27 sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once 28 when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high

intervenes between the face of God and Him, iv. 14, ix. 24. The first three terms describe the Son's lofty moral being, the other two the transcendent sphere of His existence—the one set of terms describes Him who is Priest, the other the sphere where His priesthood is exercised.

Ver. 27 describes the ministry of the Melchisedec high priest (as ver. 26 describes Himself and the sphere of His priesthood) in contrast with that of the Levitical high priest. Being a high priest He has a ministry (viii. 3), and it is one befitting His Melchisedec character and sphere. It differs from that of the Levitical high priest, (1) in that He does not need to offer for Himself, but only for the people; and (2) in His not needing to offer "daily" as those high priests, because His offering of Himself is made once for all (x. 10, 14). But though the Melchisedec high priest differs from the Levitical high priests in these two points in regard to ministry, surely He agrees with them in the general fact that He has a ministry, that is that as Melchisedec high priest He makes an atoning offering.

The term *daily* applied to the ministration of the high priests has occasioned difficulty, because the high-priestly ministration on the day of atonement to which the Author refers, as the words "first for his own sins," etc. show, was only a yearly sacrifice, as is recognised in the Epistle (ix. 7). The easiest solution of the difficulty is to suppose that the Apostle combines in one view the daily service of the priest (Ex. xxix. 38, etc.; Num. xxviii. 3, etc.) with the great sacrifice of the day of atonement. On several occasions he unites distinct points of ceremonial in one view; for example, in ix. 13, the ceremony with the ashes of the red heifer is combined with the offering on the day of atonement; comp. ix. 19, 22. The sacrifices of this day were only other sacrifices raised, so to speak, to a higher power, just as they were meant to cover all the sins of the people, whether atoned for or not already by special sacrifices.[1]—*First for his own sins.* The high priest on the day of atonement offered first a young bullock as a sin offering for himself, Lev. xvi. 3, 6, and then a goat as a sin-offering for the people, Lev. xvi. 5, 9.—*This he did once;* rather, once for all (ix. 12, x. 10). *This* refers only to offering for the people; being "perfected" already when made priest (ver. 28), He had no need to offer for Himself.—*When he offered himself, i.e.* in the sanctuary on high, ix. 11–14. All the ministry of the high priest here referred to took place in the Tabernacle; to this the Son's ministry on high corresponds. Such a ministry through His own blood (ix. 12) presupposes and includes His death (ix. 25, 26).

[1] Both Philo and the Talmudists speak of the daily ministration of the high priest, though it is uncertain whether their point of view is the same as that in this Epistle.

priests which have infirmity: but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Ver. 28. Explanation of these differences between the ministries of the Melchisedec and Levitical high priests.—*For the law maketh . . . infirmity;* or, appointeth (viii. 3, ordained). It is the infirmity of the Levitical high priests that requires that they should offer for themselves, v. 2, 3; and it is the inefficacy of their sacrifices, x. 11, that requires their daily offering.—*The word . . . since the law;* or, after the law, *i.e.* the oracle, Ps. cx. 4, given after the law and annulling it (ver. 18).—*The son, who is consecrated;* rather, a son made perfect, as ii. 10, v. 9. "Consecrated" is altogether false; all the early English Versions, Wick., Tynd., Cran., Gen., use the word *perfect.* The Son was appointed priest, having been made perfect. The term "made perfect" is a single word that embraces in it all the different points enumerated in ver. 26, relating both to the moral being and present sphere of existence of the Son. It is the high priest's infirmity that makes his offering for himself necessary. This infirmity is described as his own sins (v. 3). It is implied in the Son's perfection that He has no infirmity, but it is to press the expression "made perfect" unduly to infer from it that before His perfection the Son had infirmity—taking that infirmity even in the sense of innocent human weakness, or a moral condition still under probation. The idea of a moral probation of the Son seems foreign to the Epistle; and there seems no reference even to human weaknesses here. There is strictly no contrast between the state of the Son before perfection and when perfected. The contrast is between a Son made perfect and the human high priest who has infirmity. The Son's being made perfect excludes the idea of infirmity, and therefore the necessity of offering for Himself; but the Author's language does not suggest any contrast between the Son's state of perfection and His condition in the flesh, beyond this, that He is "separated from sinners" and "become higher than the heavens," words referring to His surroundings, not to His own moral condition.

The language here—(1) represents the Son as appointed High Priest when perfected for evermore. On this language see Note at the end of the chapter. (2) It says of Him that as Melchisedec high priest He has a ministry on high corresponding to that of the Levitical high priest in the Tabernacle, with two very important exceptions ("daily," comp. ix. 25, etc., and "for His own sins"), due to the character of the Melchisedec high priest.—The words in the past tense, "This He did once for all when He offered Himself," are apt, unless the whole passage be attended to, to throw the mind out of the right point of view, and to suggest that the Son's offering of Himself once for all does not come under His Melchisedec priesthood. But this cannot be. The passage is of the nature of a summary and deduction from the nature of the Melchisedec high priest exhibited in the previous part of the chapter. The Author

shows in a word or two the effects upon the ministry of the Melchisedec high priest which His priesthood has, making it to differ from the Levitical ministry. He says in brief what he says more at large as to principle, chap. viii. 1–6, and as to detail, chap. ix. 11–14. He says if the Son were not a Melchisedec high priest He would be still offering daily, and have to offer for Himself. Either of these necessities is inconsistent with the idea of the Melchisedec priesthood. His offering is one made not for Himself, and made once for all. The Author's historical position necessarily threw this offering into the past, and from his position he refers to it in the past tense. But though he throws it into the past, he does not throw it outside the Melchisedec priesthood, but includes it within it.

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## Note on the Priesthood of Christ.

Much difference of opinion has prevailed among writers on the Epistle on the subject of Christ's priesthood, and particularly in regard to the Apostle's view of the time when the Son assumed His high-priestly office. Some consider that he regards Christ as becoming a High Priest only when He ascended and appeared in the heavenly sanctuary. Others draw a distinction between a priesthood of Christ after the order of Aaron and one after the order of Melchisedec, and maintain that the Apostle teaches that the latter commenced after the Son's ascension, and continues unchangeable; while the former was exercised upon earth, but merged itself and disappeared in the higher after He ascended into heaven.

The question, When did Christ become a high priest? has a historical interest in connection with Socinian controversies. As formally raised and discussed by F. Socinus and the Socinian interpreters it was part of the larger question, whether the death of Christ was truly an atoning sacrifice for sins. This was denied by these interpreters. This denial required that the sacrificial language of Scripture should be taken in a metaphorical sense. And the difficulty of maintaining this view was felt to be increased by those passages of Scripture which seemed to represent the death of Christ as in such a sense an act of His own that He took part in it as a ministering priest. It was therefore in the interest of the great Socinian position to dissociate His death from His priesthood, and transfer the latter altogether to His present sphere in heaven. Dissociated from His death, the priesthood became somewhat figurative too, meaning a general position of influence with God on high. It would be unfair to the Socinians to say that it was their general theological interest alone that suggested to them the view that the sphere of Christ's priesthood was exclusively in heaven. They believed that they found the idea in the Epistle; only, in their opinion, and in that of their contemporaries, the discovery was a happy one for them.

In the opinion of modern expounders of the Epistle, the doctrine

position of the Socinians has long been overcome. Though presenting the offering of Christ under the aspect of a sacrifice of purification and initiation of an eternal covenant relation between God and the People, rather than under that of a penal satisfaction to righteousness, and though regarding sins more as a defilement hindering the approach of the People in worship and service of God than as transgressions of His law subjecting them to His wrath, sin is no less an objective hindrance to the fellowship of God with the People in the view of the Epistle than it is on the other view, and the offering of Christ is no less an objective and true putting of it away, ix. 26. When separated, therefore, from this main question, the other question, whether the Epistle represents Christ as acting as a priest in His own death, ceases to have the importance that it had before. In the ordinary Jewish sacrifices, it was no part of the priest's office to slay the victim; this was done by the offerer; the priest's duty commenced with the handling of the blood, which he received and sprinkled or poured upon the altar, that is, offered before God (Lev. i. 4, 5). If therefore Christ's death was truly sacrificial, the question, at what momemt He Himself entered and took part in the series of acts connected with it, whether in the death of the victim or only, so to speak, in handling the blood, may not seem of supreme importance. Granting even that it was essential to its being a true offering that He Himself took a voluntary part in it, his voluntariness might not be drawn in under His priestly action. The distinction, however, between the death of the sacrifice and the entrance of the high priest into the most holy place through the blood, implied in raising such a question, is one recognised neither by the Epistle nor by the Old Testament ritual which it follows.

Reference may be made first to the view mentioned second at the beginning of this note, viz. that Christ was at one time a priest after the order of Aaron, and on His ascension became a priest after the order of Melchisedec.[1]

According to the representation of the Epistle, there is no difference in principle between priest and high priest. Melchisedec is

1 This view is expressed very lucidly and succinctly in the following extract: 'Jesus as the GREAT High Priest exercises His office only in heaven; as the High Priest, as a priest after the fashion of Aaron, He exercised His office on earth, and continued to exercise it when He ascended into heaven. As a priest after the order of Aaron He offered Himself a sacrifice upon the cross, even as Aaron offered the victim on the altar on the great day of atonement; as a priest after the same order He presented Himself in His humanity before His Father in heaven, even as Aaron carried the blood of the slain victim within the veil, into the presence of Jehovah. Then and there the one species of priesthood became merged or transformed into the other higher, highest ideal species; the priesthood exercised in humiliation into the priesthood associated with royal dignity and glory . . .'—Professor Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ*, p. 309. The two statements, Aaron offered the victim on the altar, and Aaron carried the blood within the veil, tend somewhat to mislead the mind. The altar on the day of atonement was just the mercy-seat within the veil, and there was no other offering of the victim on the altar besides the carrying of the blood within the veil, for the slaying of the victim was not done at the altar (see Note on Day of Atonement).

called in Scripture a priest, Gen. xiv. 18; Ps. cx. 4; and in the section treating of the order of Melchisedec, chap. vii., this language is retained, and Christ is spoken of as a Priest; but when referred to as having a ministry He is called a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, v. 10, vi. 20, vii. 26–28. Neither is there any difference in principle between the ministry of the priest and that of high priest.

"Order" of priesthood refers not to ministry, but to the person of the priest or high priest, vii. 1–10, or to the *personnel*, if the priesthood as in the case of the Levitical consists of more than one person. Further, all priests of whatever order must have essentially the same kind of ministry. This consists of a place of ministry or sanctuary, an offering, and an entrance into the presence of God with and in virtue of this offering. Such things are the essentials of priestly service, and they belong to any economy or covenant v. 1, ix. 1, viii. 3.[1]

The covenant being a state of relation between God and a People that serve Him, the priest, or particularly the high priest, becomes the prominent figure in it, both as a minister and as representative of the People. The priesthood is the basis of the economy, vii. 11. And what is important in the priest is his order. The kind of sacrifice he offers, the place where he ministers it, the nature of his approach unto God, and consequently the nature of the covenant relation between God and the People, and the degree to which the redemptive promises of God are realized—all depend upon his order or kind of personality. The first covenant had a priesthood after the order of Aaron, created by the law of a fleshly commandment—mortal men, having infirmity, vii. 16, 28; its sanctuary of this world, ix. 1, the very construction of which intimated that the way into the presence of God was yet barred, ix. 8; its ministry there ix. 7; and its sacrifices which could not reach the conscience, ix. 9 nor take away sin, x. 2, 3. The new covenant has its priest after the order of Melchisedec, vii. 11, made priest according to the power of an indissoluble life, vii. 16; a minister of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not man, viii. 1, 2, that is, heaven, where God is present in truth, ix. 24—with his ministry in that sanctuary viii. 3–6, ix. 11, 12; and its sacrifice truly removing sin, ix. 12, and cleansing the conscience, ix. 14, and perfecting for ever them that are sanctified, x. 14; comp. vii. 11, ix. 13, 14. Each of these two sets of things hangs together in itself, and the two sets are incapable of confusion; no element of the one series can be introduced into the other. In the above extract it is said: "As a priest after the same order [Aaron's] He presented Himself in His humanity before His Father in heaven, even as Aaron carried the blood of the slain victim within the veil." But how did a priest of the order of Aaron find himself ministering in heaven, when according to the Epistle the

[1] No reference is made in the Epistle to Melchisedec's own ministry. The idea that, like Melchisedec, Christ succours the "war-worn with bread and wine" is attractive, but it did not occur to the Apostle.

characteristic of the Aaronic priests is that "they serve unto that which is a copy of the heavenly things," viii. 5? The Aaronic priest ministers in the sanctuary of this world, the figure of the true, ix. 1, 23; if he could penetrate into "heaven," the true Tabernacle, he would cease to be an Aaronic or figurative priest, he would be in the true presence of God, into which he could enter only in virtue of having made a true atonement, ix. 12–14, which no Aaronic priest could accomplish. It may be said that, of course, Christ is not strictly an Aaronic priest, He is antitype of Aaron. That is true. But a high priest who, in our phraseology, is antitype of Aaron, is in the language of this Epistle a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. The confusion arises from supposing that "order" has reference to ministry. Order has reference to the person of the high priest, or to what immediately springs out of his person. The acts of ministry are the same in all high priests of whatever order they be. The Melchisedec high priest goes through the same priestly acts as the Levitical or Aaronic, but his order, that is, virtually the nature of his person, alters the character of these acts, and makes them, instead of being fleshen and figurative, spiritual and possessing ideal validity.

Christ is said to be a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and a "Minister" in the true Tabernacle, but the only high-priestly act of ministry referred to is the entering of the high priest within the veil on the day of atonement, to which Christ's entrance into the sanctuary on high corresponds. If this act be withdrawn from His Melchisedec priesthood, He has, in fact, no "ministry" as a Melchisedec high priest, and the extraordinary result is reached that the high priest, who abiding before the face of God for us is surety of the eternal covenant, is of a different order from the high priest who in His entrance before God realized this covenant. On this view everything connected with atonement and the sanctifying the People, the true work of the high priest (v. 1, viii. 3, ix. 7, xiii. 12), would lie outside the Melchisedec high priesthood of the Son. But that the Apostle regards this as lying within it, is evident from the line of thinking pursued in chap. vii. 11, etc. It is, no doubt, the great idea of the Epistle, written to Christian Hebrews, the People of God, that the eternal covenant has been inaugurated and exists, and that it is expressed in the Melchisedec high priest, representative of the People, sitting for ever with God; but the steps that led to its being formed are broadly set forth. And these steps are comprehended under the Melchisedec priesthood. This is evident from the position of chap. vii. in the Epistle. Having several times alluded to the Melchisedec priesthood (v. 10, vi. 20), the Apostle comes at last to the discussion of it. But this discussion *precedes* the discussion of the new covenant (viii. 1–6, ix. 15, etc.), the new ministry, and the new offering (ix. 1–14). After chap. vii. Melchisedec by name is not alluded to, because it is understood that the sacrifice, the service, the covenant, and the salvation, afterwards treated (chap. viii.–x. 18), all fall within the sphere of His priesthood. On any other view chap. vii.

is an episode, and entirely in the wrong place in the Epistle; it should have been inserted after chap. x. 18. But episodes in an Epistle so skilfully planned as this are not to be thought of. The order of treatment is perspicuous enough. First, it is shown (chap. iv. 14–v. 10) that the Son is a true high priest, taken from among men on the one hand, and appointed by God on the other, and having learned sympathy through His human life, with all its experiences, including death. Then, after an appeal of a practical kind, the "order" of His priesthood is treated (chap. vii.): He is a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. And only when these two preliminary points which concern the Priest Himself have been treated, does the Apostle proceed to His ministry, first as to its place (viii. 1–6), and then as to its offering (ix. 11–14). It would argue a peculiar condition of mind in the Writer, if he first gave an elaborate account of the order of a priesthood, and then proceeded to describe a ministry of the priest which was not performed by Him as a priest of that order, but of one quite different. The order of Melchisedec is that He is a priest for ever. This point, which concerns the Priest Himself, does not cause Him to perform other priestly acts from those performed by Aaron, but it implies that His priestly acts are final, and that through them He dedicates an eternal covenant, which He ever liveth to sustain. This order, expressed by "for ever," belongs to Him in virtue of His indissoluble life (vii. 16). Whatever this be, it is something which He certainly possessed from the moment of His rising from the dead. It is certain, therefore, that all the Son's priestly acts in heaven belong to the sphere of His Melchisedec priesthood. In truth, "heaven," the region of realities and things themselves and God's presence, and "Levitical" or Aaronic, the region of the copies of things and "this world," mutually exclude each other. But, further, the reasoning in vii. 11, etc. shows that in the view of the Epistle, the Son's descent from Judah, and not from Levi, threw Him outside of the order of Aaron (see notes). Our Lord, therefore, was never a priest after the order of Aaron, but always, from the moment He was a priest at all, a priest after the order of Melchisedec.

The other question now rises, When in the view of the Epistle did the Son become a High Priest?—According to Old Testament ideas which the Epistle follows, the slaying of the victim and the entering of the high priest into the holiest with the blood constituted one act of sacrifice. The sacrifice was not merely an offering, it was the realizing through the offering of the continued covenant relation of the Lord and the People. This was shown in the entering of the high priest, the representative of the People, with blood into the holiest, the very presence of God. Yet the priest did not enter in virtue of an offering already made, as if the mere slaying of the victim were the offering, and the blood carried in a mere reminiscence of this or a symbol of it. It was the blood that atoned. The sacrifice was not yet made until the life, the blood, was "offered" (ix. 7) before the Lord and received by Him (Note on Day of Atonement). *The high priest and the blood went in together.* This was a double

act, or two acts in one. Carrying in the blood he made atonement, and he was enabled to go in in virtue of the atonement which he made, and entering into the presence of the Lord in service he realized and exhibited, being the representative of the People, the continued covenant fellowship of the People with their God. The Epistle transfers all this to the ministry of the Son. He entered through His blood into the true holiest, God's dwelling-place, and obtained eternal redemption (ix. 12), and in virtue of the redemption obtained He appeared before the face of God for us (ix. 24); and as He sat down on the right hand of God and came no more out from His presence, He realized in Himself as the representative of the People an eternal fellowship of service on the one hand (ix. 14), and help on the other (iv. 16, xiii. 21), between the People and God.

This being the point of view of the Epistle, its peculiar language regarding the priesthood of the Son becomes less obscure. 1. The death of the Son and His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary being one act, not merely of atonement, but of this and through this of realizing and embodying the eternal covenant fellowship of God and the People, the two things are not considered apart from one another, but combined in one view. And the great point being the actual realizing of the covenant union, which took place in fact in the ministry of the great High Priest, that is, in His *entrance* as representative of the People before the face of God, the chief weight is made to fall on this, and the death as a distinct thing is little alluded to, though it is, of course, always understood as forming the background of the picture, the prominent object in which is the entrance of the representative high priest before God. It is doubtful if the Epistle anywhere regards the Son's death considered merely in itself as a priestly act. It never occurred to the Author to draw that distinction between the death in itself and the ministry which has so much occupied modern minds. The two were inseparable parts of one act, of which the second, however, being the actual realizing in fact of the covenant union, was the point of importance. And the Epistle seems to confine the high-priestly ministry to the acts done in the sanctuary, and to refrain from including under the priesthood, when it is spoken of distinctively, any acts not done there.

2. Further, the other point also keenly discussed in modern times, whether the Son was a priest on earth, which is but the former point under another view, is not formally touched on in the Epistle. A priesthood verifies itself and comes into valid existence by the actual performance of the priestly acts. Hence the Epistle identifies Christ's acts as a priest with His priesthood. The Son exhibited and authenticated Himself as a priest in the performance of His priestly functions.[1] This positive side is what is alone before the Author's mind; there is no evidence that the negative side as it presents itself to us in the question, Was the Son a priest before His performance of His priestly acts? ever occurred to him. The positive point was the important one to him, writing to men entangled in the

[1] Weiss, *N. T. Theology*, p. 510, note 2.

fascinations of another priestly ritual, that the Son was such a High Priest as sat down on the right hand of God, a minister of the true Tabernacle (viii. 1). Hence drawing no distinction between the Son's priestly acts and His priesthood, the Epistle speaks of Him as becoming a priest when He performed these acts (ii. 17, vi. 20), and represents God as saluting Him as a priest for ever when He appeared in the heavenly sanctuary (vi. 20). These and a multitude of other passages present merely the positive fact of the Son's being a priest, a fact verified and embodied in His performance of His priestly offices; they do not touch the negative point whether He was a priest before this. The Epistle, however, regards the Son's appearance in the flesh as a redemptive act; it views His whole history in no other aspect than as the history of the Leader of Salvation, each successive step in which was an entering into and fulfilling by Him of this vocation; and therefore, though the Son grasped the occasions of His mission as they successively presented themselves, and might thus be described as becoming a priest, when He performed the offices of His priesthood, strictly speaking He was only verifying, in the only way possible, viz. by actual fulfilling of its offices, His true priesthood; and the word *became* is hardly to be taken in any more absolute sense. At the same time it is important to do justice to the Author's language. This language is, no doubt, due partly to the fact that both to him and his readers the acts of the Son's priesthood lay in the past, and he speaks from the point of view of the Son's present state on high. This has led to the view that under the Melchisedec priesthood He embraces only this *state*, which ensued after the performance of the acts of atonement, which are thus thrown outside of the Melchisedec priesthood; but this view seems opposed to the whole scope of the Epistle.

3. There is another class of passages in which the priesthood of the Son is not formally under treatment, and in these His sacrifice is spoken of in a more general way, and referred to as His death, His being offered, the offering of His body, and the like, and the effects, elsewhere connected with the priesthood, are ascribed to the death. Some of these are apologetic passages which vindicate the necessity of the incarnation and death of the Son. Others set the death in a more objective light, connecting it with principles in the mind of God (ii. 10), or regard it as the sacrifice inaugurating the covenant (ix. 15, etc.).

(1) Passages in which the Epistle speaks of the service of the high priest as confined to the sanctuary, and represents the entrance of the high priest there as the culminating act of the sacrifice, are viii. 3, ix. 1, 6, 7, comp. with ix. 11, 12, and see Lev. xvi. This entrance of the high priest was not only an atoning or sanctifying act, but also the actual realizing of the covenant fellowship of the People with God. The sacrificial term "offer" is used of this act of ministration—expressly of the high priest's act, ix. 7, but also indirectly of the Son's, viii. 3. "Offer himself" also is employed of the same

action, ix. 25, vii. 27, and "offer sacrifice," x. 11; comp. x. 14. In taking this view of the presentation of the blood as strictly the act of atonement, the Epistle follows the precedent of Old Testament language and conception. The blood contained the life or was the life. The laying of it on the altar was the offering of the life unto God, and this made atonement (Lev. xvii. 11; Heb. ix. 12).[1]

The steps of the Old Testament ritual of worship are closely followed in the Epistle, and its point of view is apt to be lost sight of when this is not attended to. A prevailing tendency has been to disconnect the ministry in the sanctuary with atonement, the latter being regarded as completed in the sacrificial death, and hence some vague meaning has been put upon the Son's entrance into the sanctuary on high before God, and it has been regarded as His bringing His finished offering before the presence of God,—it being forgotten that the essential point in any offering is that it be brought before God, and that until it is so it is no finished offering.[2] The feeling, indeed, is difficult to get rid of, that whatever high-priestly acts Christ performs in heaven must be acts which He performs continuously there. Hence His entrance through His blood into the heavenly sanctuary is apt to be degraded down to some vague generality called giving *prevalence* to His acts done on earth and considered a continuous thing. But this is not the view of the Epistle. The entrance of the Son is the culminating point of His atoning sacrifice,—is strictly the atoning point itself; is an act of His Melchisedec priesthood, and is an act done once for all (ix. 12, x. 12, ix. 25). This is, however, but one side of the meaning of His entrance. The words "once for all" imply that His entrance as representative High Priest was the realization in fact of the state of covenant union between God and the People, and this state has abiding and eternal embodiment in His continuing as representative High Priest to sit at God's right hand. Christ is still a Melchisedec High Priest, and continues to execute His high-priestly office in such ways as naturally follow His one offering of Himself for ever; but the idea that in any sense He repeats the offering of Himself, or that He continues it, is wholly absent from the Epistle.

(2) Passages in which the Son's actual performance of His priestly offices is identified with His priesthood, and the latter is spoken of as commencing with this performance of His priestly acts, are, chap. ii. 17, comp. iv. 14, 15; chap. v. 5 (ii. 9, iii. 3); comp. the connected

[1] The Epistle avoids such language as that Christ carried in or offered His blood, for obvious reasons. Such language could be used of the high priest's act, but not of His.

[2] Witsius and other theologians clearly perceived this, and felt that it was necessary to do justice to the language and conceptions of the Epistle on this point. Hence they suggested that Christ's entrance through His blood into the heavenly sanctuary before God was not to be identified with His Ascension, but was an act which He performed in His disembodied state in immediate temporal connection with His death on the cross.—See a hearty defence of this view in Prof. Smeaton's *Apostles' Doctrine*, p. 48, etc., and p. 339, etc.

passage, v. 7–10, which describes the path through which He became priest; chap. vi. 19, 20; the three passages which speak of His being made perfect, ii. 10, v. 9, vii. 28, also chap. vii. 26. And that His ministry, which is specially His atoning ministry, is exercised in the sanctuary on high is stated in viii. 1, 2 to be the chief point in the Apostle's teaching. And it is added that it could be only there, viii. 4; comp. ix. 11, 12, ix. 23, 24. In the language and thinking of the Epistle, "in heaven" expresses what we should call real or ideally true. Heaven is the region of realities, the abode of God in truth, and the priest who would offer an efficacious sacrifice must offer it there.

(3) In another class of passages the atoning effect is connected with the death of Christ. In most of these the priestly conception falls into the background: see chap. ix. 15; comp. ii. 9, xi. 40, xii. 23, also chap. ix. 14. The term "without spot" in this passage suggests the condition of the victim before offering (Lev. i. 3)—though here also it is the blood that atones. Again, chap. ix. 28; comp. 1 Pet. ii. 24. In ix. 25, "offer Himself," as ver. 26 indicates, refers to the act of service in the sanctuary, but "suffer," ver. 26 (comp. xiii. 12) shows that the death is inseparably connected with this. In chap. x. 10 the death seems certainly included in the "offering."—Most if not all of these passages speak generally of the sacrifice of the Son as a whole, and not formally of His priesthood and its functions. When the priesthood is spoken of specifically, it is usually held to cover only the acts done in the sanctuary, but there may be a certain fluctuation in the mode of representation, and in such passages as ix. 14, x. 10, the whole sacrificial act may be brought under the priesthood. When it is understood that the one sacrificial act included the death and the ministry as inseparable parts of it, the question is of little importance. On the one hand, as stated in the beginning of this note, in the ordinary sacrificial ritual it was no part of the priest's office to slay the victim, his office was to minister in the sanctuary alone (ix. 6). On the other hand, Lev. xvi. seems to imply that, contrary to the practice on ordinary occasions, on the day of Atonement the high priest himself slew the victim, and thus performed the whole sacrifice from beginning to end. This action of the high priest in the forecourt is supposed to correspond to the death of the Son on the cross. This analogy, however, receives no direct support from anything said in the Epistle (comp. xiii. 12 and notes). Others go the length of extemporizing a new typology, and regard the earth as the forecourt of that sanctuary which is heaven itself. This is a large thought and therefore attractive, but it is entirely without support from the Epistle.

Chap. viii. 1–x. 18. **The ministry of the Melchisedec high priest in its meaning, and therefore as the basis of a new covenant.**

**Connection.**—The Author had shown in the passage iv. 14–v. 10 that Jesus was a true and sympathizing High Priest, being taken from among men and appointed by God, and having passed through human history. Then after a practical digression suggested by the feeling how difficult it was to lay the subject of the Melchisedec priesthood clearly before minds so backward as those of the Hebrews (chap. v. 11–vi. 20), he had come to that subject, and expounded in chap. vii. the nature of the Melchisedec priesthood, and the consequences in regard to the Levitical system and the Law which the introduction of such a priesthood carried with it. Among these consequences, arising from the nature or order of the Melchisedec priest, there were two extending even into his own ministry and distinguishing it from that of the Levitical priests, viz. that he did not need to offer for himself, and that his offering did not need to be repeated (vii. 26–28). These references to the ministry of the Melchisedec high priest introduce that subject, and the Author on entering upon it begins by stating its capital principle, what he calls the "chief point" in the things which he is saying, which is, that the Melchisedec high priest is a minister, that is, an offering priest who *belongs* to the true Tabernacle, that is, heaven. He is attached to that sanctuary, has his ministry there. This general principle does not mean that he belongs to this sanctuary *now*, but that he belongs to it absolutely, just as the Levitical priest belongs to the tabernacle of this world, and that all his ministry of whatever kind is performed there.

**Outline.**—1. Introductory and general statement in regard to the ministry of the Melchisedec High Priest.—The chief point is that He is a minister or officiating High Priest belonging to the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man, *i.e.* the heavens; just as the Levitical priests are ministers making offerings in the tabernacle of this world. His ministry is more excellent than that of the Levitical or Aaronic priests by as much as the covenant of which He is the mediator is better than the first covenant (chap. viii. 1–6).

2. These two things, the more excellent Melchisedec atoning ministry and the better new covenant, in their contrasts with the Levitical ministry and the first covenant and in their relation to one another, exhaust the passage that follows on to chap. x. 18, in three great sections:—

(1) The covenants, the first (viii. 7–9) and the new (viii. 10–13), in contrast, chap. viii. 7–13.

(2) The ministries, Levitical (ix. 1–10) and Melchisedec (ix. 11–14), in contrast, chap. ix. 1–14.

(3) The more excellent Melchisedec ministry and the better new covenant together, ix. 15–x. 18.

VIII. 1 Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum:
we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of
2 the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the
sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched,

Chap. viii. 1–6. Introductory.—**The chief point in regard to the Melchisedec high priest: he is a ministering priest, and in the true heavenly sanctuary.**

We have a High Priest, a minister of the true Tabernacle (vers. 1, 2). I say "a minister," for every high priest has an offering (ver. 3); and "in heaven"—for if he were on earth he would not belong to the class of priest at all, for the place of priest is occupied there by them that serve the Tabernacle of this world, the copy of the true (vers. 3–5). *His* ministry is more excellent than theirs by as much as the covenant of which He is the mediator is better than the covenant which their ministry subserves (ver. 6).

In all this passage the two things to which prominence is given are:—That we have a High Priest who has an atoning ministry like other high priests; and that He belongs to the true Tabernacle—His ministry is attached to this. No reference is made in all the passage to the time when His ministry is exercised. What is pointed out is merely His *connection* as a ministering High Priest with the true Tabernacle in heaven.

Vers. 1, 2. *Now of the things . . . seem;* rather, **now of the things which we are saying** (lit. which are being said), **the chief point is.**[1] The chief point is as follows:—We have a High Priest who sat down . . . a minister, etc.—*Such an High Priest . . . set;* or, **who sat down.** "Such" is explained by the words "who sat down," etc. This is a trait in the history of this High Priest, and indicates both His greatness and the sphere where He is. He sat down and He is a minister of the true Tabernacle. Of course His sitting down did not precede but followed His ministry there. His *sitting down* and His being a minister in the *true* sanctuary have the same meaning, and imply the *finality* of His offering. All that may be said of the High Priest and His ministry is grouped together so as to be taken in at one glance, and His sitting down at the right hand of God is a token both of His greatness and of the finality of the offering which He made as a minister in the true Tabernacle (x. 11, 12). The Apostle combines the two prophetical passages, Sit at my right hand, Ps. cx. 1, and Thou art a Priest, Ps. cx. 4; the first is the basis of ver. 1, and the second of ver. 2; and the two verses imply that our High Priest is in the heavens and has His high-priestly ministry there, and suggests the finality of His offering there.

The heavenly "sanctuary" corresponds to the holy of holies, the innermost division of the Mosaic sacred tent; the "true Tabernacle," however, does not seem to correspond to the outer division or holy place, but to be a name for the whole tent, or place of ministry, s

[1] Tynd., Cran., of the things which we have spoken this is the "pyth." Ger has, summe.

3 and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts
and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have
4 somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should
not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts

that "and" introduces not a distinct idea, but the same in a more general form (comp. ix. 24). The heavenly Tabernacle is called "true" because real and eternal and primary, while that on earth is only secondary and a mere copy (ver. 5). This is expressed also by saying that the Lord pitched it, not man;[1] or as is elsewhere said, it is not of this (world's) creation (ix. 11), and not made with hands.

Vers. 3–5 expand and support the statement of the chief point in vers. 1, 2, a minister of the true Tabernacle.

Being a minister, that is, an officiating high priest (Joel i. 9; Isa. lxi. 6; Jer. xxxiii. 21; Neh. x. 39), he must have an offering, for it is the very function of a high priest to "offer" gifts and sacrifices.—*This man have somewhat also;* or, **that this high priest also have somewhat to offer.** The noun to *this* is not expressed, and has to be supplied from the foregoing "every high priest." "Somewhat to offer" is a very happy rendering. What he offers is not meantime of importance, he has an offering. Neither is there any reference to the *time* when he offers, though the word perhaps implies that the offering is one that is made once for all. But of course it *is* implied by the connection that the place of the offering is in the true Tabernacle, for this is just the gist of the whole passage. The Author's chief point is that the Melchisedec high priest is a ministering priest in the heavenly sanctuary, and to support this point by saying that this priest must have an offering which he offers somewhere else would be peculiar reasoning. No doubt the high priest is described generally as appointed "to offer gifts and sacrifices," but that "offering" of the high priest to which Christ's corresponds is expressly defined to be "blood which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people" in the most holy place (ix. 7). The "somewhat to offer" which Christ has is somewhat which He offers in the sanctuary on high.

Vers. 4, 5 support the point that the Melchisedec high priest's ministry is in the true Tabernacle, as ver. 3 supported the point that he is a minister. *For if he were on earth . . . a priest;* or, **he would not be a priest at all**; that is, he would not belong to the class of priest. The meaning is not that he would not even be a priest, much less a high priest (for between these two essentially there is no difference), but he would not have priestly functions at all. "For" connects with ver. 2, which is still in the Author's mind.[2]—*Seeing*

[1] The "and" before "not man" is to be omitted.

[2] Another reading is *now* if. This is perhaps easier in itself; the emphasis is then thrown on vers. 4, 5, and ver. 3 serves rather as a stepping-stone; being a high priest he has, of course, an offering, now if he were on earth . . . Undoubtedly the main idea of the passage is that the sphere of the Son's offering is heaven; but ver. 3 has a certain apparent independence which seems to suffer on this construction.

5 according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed

*there are priests;* rather, **seeing there are those who offer the gifts.** So the best MSS. with omission of "priests," and the expression "the gifts" is made definite by "according to the law." If the Son were on earth He could not exercise the priestly office at all, because there are those there already who are priests, created by divine law and offering divinely prescribed gifts, with whom it is impossible that He should interfere. He is not of the family of Levi (vii. 14), but a priest of another order; shadow and substance cannot be confused. "On earth" is used as the opposite of in heaven; the priests on earth minister in the Tabernacle of this world, His ministry must be elsewhere. It is said here that the ministry of the Melchisedec high priest must be in the Tabernacle on high. It has been argued that all that is implied in this is that His ministry so far as it is exercised in a Tabernacle must be exercised in heaven, but that this does not preclude such parts of the priestly ministry as are not performed in a Tabernacle from having been done on earth. This is true. But the question as regards this Epistle is whether it do not, both in the case of the Levitical and the Melchisedec priests, limit the priestly function to the acts of ministry exercised in the Tabernacle; or at least in point of fact refrain from bringing in under the priestly office any acts but those done in the Tabernacle.

Ver. 5. *Who serve . . . example of heavenly things;* or, **who serve . . . a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.** "Copy" (patterns, ix. 23; example, iv. 11) means a delineation or outline of something presented to view; comp. "shown thee in the mount." "Shadow" is a dim and unsubstantial representation; in x. 1 it is contrasted with "image," a true likeness. The earthly sanctuary and tabernacle, though in some sense a representation of the heavenly things, are an imperfect likeness. In heaven are the true sanctuary and tabernacle.

*According to the pattern;* lit. **type.** The passage furnishes no answer to these two questions, which were not properly before the Author's mind: 1. Whether what Moses saw was the heavenly things themselves, or only representations of them; and 2. How he saw them, whether with his eyes or in vision or through being enabled to conceive them. Some consider that a model was shown to Moses, and there are Jewish critics who say that this is still standing on Mount Sinai. No traveller has yet reported having seen it. It is scarcely in accordance with the Author's mode of representation that any distinction should be drawn between that which Moses was shown and the heavenly things themselves. But the point which he desires to make is that the earthly tabernacle made off what was shown in the mount, is but "a copy;" the true original tabernacle is in heaven. The earthly tabernacle and vessels

6 to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

being made according to the "type" shown in the mount, become the "antitypes" of the heavenly things (ix. 24), the type being primary, and the antitype, corresponding to it, secondary. This is rather to invert ordinary theological phraseology.—On the command referred to, see Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30, xxvii. 8; Num. viii. 4; comp. Acts vii. 44.

Ver. 6. *But now . . . more excellent.* "Now" is not temporal, but means, as things in fact are. On "excellent" comp. i. 14.—*By how much . . . a better covenant.* The Melchisedec ministry is as much more excellent than the Levitical as the new covenant to which it belongs (ix. 1), or which is based on it (vii. 11), is better than the first; and it is better than the first inasmuch as it is one which has been established, lit. legislated, or enacted by law, on better promises. The better promises follow in ver. 10, etc. The word "enacted by law" is used to correspond to "according to the law" in ver. 4; the new covenant is no less of divine enactment than the first; comp. vers. 8–10. The "promises" here refer to the nature of the new covenant itself, they are not the great general promises made to Abraham (vii. 6). Both covenants contemplated the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promises; the former failed from its nature; the second, being based on better promises as to its own character, will not fail (ix. 15). The new covenant is not enacted on the promise of *other* things, for the idea of all covenants is the fellowship of God with man, which implies that He forgives their sin on the one hand, and that they obey His law on the other; the point of superiority of the new covenant lies here, that it is based on the promise really to effect what it aimed at, which the first covenant was unable to do. —Jesus is Mediator of this new covenant,—first, in revealing it, i. 1, ii. 1, iii. 1; and second, in initiating it by the blood of the covenant, ix. 11, ix. 16, etc., x. 29.

Vers. 7–13. **The first and new covenants in contrast.**

1. The first covenant was not faultless. For God finding fault characterizes it thus:—Those under it continued not in it; and, therefore, God disregarded those under it, vers. 7-9.

2. The better promises of the new covenant—(1) that the Law shall be no more external, but written on the heart; (2) that therefore knowledge of God shall be universal, and not the property of classes such as priests or prophets; and (3) that these two former things shall arise through God's finally forgiving sin, and thus bringing men into perfect fellowship with Himself, so that they shall know Him (2) and obey Him in love (1), vers. 10–12.

3. The mention of a new covenant in Jeremiah's days character-

7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no
8 place have been sought for the second. For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel
9 and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them
10 not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be
11 to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest

ized the first as even thus already old; that which faileth for age is ready to vanish away, ver. 13.

Vers. 7–9. **The faultiness of the first covenant.**

The covenant itself was in a sense to blame for its failure; it could not secure that men should keep it; comp. Gal. iii. 21.—*Place have been sought.* Place was sought in the prediction, Jer. xxxi. 31–34. To seek place for, is to contemplate the inbringing of or the existence of (comp. Rev. xx. 11), as everything must exist in a "place." The passage here quoted is Jer. xxxi. 31, etc. It was spoken after Israel and Judah were both in exile. The exile was the proof that the first covenant was virtually broken and ready to disappear. It had been found from its own character, and from the nature of men, ineffectual for its purposes. On the ruins of it rose in the hearts of the prophets and the people, through God's teaching, the hope of a better covenant, which should never be broken (Isa. liv. 9, 10).

Vers. 10–12. **The better promises of the new covenant.**

The first promise is that the law shall be written on the heart, no more on mere outward tables of stone. Written on the heart it is first knowledge, and then impulse; its obedience follows as by a spiritual instinct. The Apostle here comes in contact with the Pauline "law of the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 1), but he nowhere connects this law of the heart with the Spirit.—To this promise is attached the statement, I will be their God. That statement expresses the *idea* of a covenant between God and man; in those days this idea shall be verified, the covenant relation will be real between God and His people.

Ver. 11. The second promise of universal knowledge may be regarded as the result of what was contained in the first promise, or it may be a mere expansion of the first. The words, they shall no

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins
13 and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

more teach every man his fellow-citizen[1] and brother, are not strictly part of the promise, but a graphic mode of describing the state of things when knowledge of God is universal. An external law can be known only to some, and these must be the teachers of others. A law written on the heart, like a universal principle of the mind, is known to all, no priest or prophet is required to teach it; and such classes disappear, or rather all the Lord's people are prophets (Num. xi. 29; Joel ii. 28); and as it is a *law* as well as knowledge, exhortation is not needed to the observance of it. This description, we need not be said, is ideal; the prophets in their delineations of the future Church always contemplate it in its perfect condition; comp. Joel ii. 28; Isa. xi. 9, liv. 13.

Ver. 12. The third promise, that of final forgiveness of sin, being introduced by the word *for*, is seen to be the basis of the preceding ones; and so the Apostle regards it as virtually the whole promise on which the new covenant is enacted, x. 16, 17. Here lay the defect of the first covenant and its ministry (ix. 9, x. 4, 11); and here the ministry of the new is more excellent (ver. 6, ix. 14, x. 14). Those thus forgiven have access to the very throne of God (iv. 16, x. 19); they know Him and can serve Him free from the consciousness of sin (ix. 14) and with a true heart (x. 22).[2]

Ver. 13. So far back as the days of Jeremiah the first covenant was made old by the mention of a new; that which is old is ready to vanish away. The Apostle does not say it is disannulled, he says it is expiring of old age. This was its condition when the promise of a new covenant was made; he leaves it to be inferred that now with the realizing of this promise it has actually vanished away.

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## Note on the Two Covenants.

The Hebrew word for covenant has no other meaning. The Greek word corresponding to it means also testament or will. This was rendered in the Latin Versions *testamentum*, which seems to have had the same latitude of signification. And this term has passed into the modern languages as the representative of the Greek. In the English Bible the Greek word is rendered "testament" in several places (Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25; 2 Cor. iii. 6, 14; Heb. vii. 22, ix. 15, 16, 17, 20; Rev. xi. 19). This ought probably to be replaced by "covenant" everywhere except in Heb. ix. 16, etc. (see notes). Naturally, from meaning the covenant

[1] So the best MSS. instead of "neighbour."
[2] The words "and their iniquities" are to be omitted in ver. 12.

or testament itself, the word passed over to signify the Scriptura which embodied the testament. Hence we speak of the Old an New Testament (2 Cor. iii. 14).

A covenant is properly an agreement between two parties, wh bind themselves by certain conditions with the view of attainin some object. A covenant may be between equals, as that betwee Abraham and Abimelech (Gen. xxi. 32), or between parties of whon one is superior to the other, as that between Joshua and th Gibeonites (Josh. ix.). The covenant relation between God and me is of the latter kind, for God imposes the covenant (chap. viii. 8–10 None the less both parties lay themselves under obligations an contemplate an object by the covenant. A covenant between Go and men cannot possibly have any other meaning than that He wi be their God and they His People (viii. 10).

The Epistle contemplates religion or the relation of God and me under this aspect of a covenant. It distinguishes two covenants, tha made at Sinai (viii. 9), and that made through Christ (ix. 15). Th former is called the *first* covenant (viii. 7, ix. 1, 18); it is not name the "old" covenant, although it is said that God, in announcing new covenant, has made the first old (viii. 13). The latter is calle a second (viii. 7), a better (vii. 22, viii. 6), a new as having differen contents (viii. 8, ix. 15), and also new as being recent (xii. 24), and a eternal covenant (xiii. 20, comp. vii. 22). The first covenant wa not faultless—so mildly does the Author express himself (viii. 7); th second is enacted upon better promises (viii. 6, 10–12). The Epistl does not speak of a covenant with Abraham, as the Pauline Epistle do (Gal. iii. 15, 17); it knows of promises to Abraham (vi. 13, vii. 6 which the first covenant was ineffectual to realize (xi. 39), which, how ever, are realized through the second (ix. 15).[1]

The covenant relation is not its own end. It is rather a relatio within which the People are being matured for that final blessednes which God has destined for them. No doubt this maturing of the always more fully realizes the covenant relation, and this of itself a great and blessed end. But it is chiefly regarded as the means t that which lies beyond, which is the bringing of the People to sphere of existence that shall fully correspond to their capacitie and needs. This end is variously described: it is, inheriting th promises (vi. 12), or, receiving the promise of the eternal inheritanc (ix. 15); reaching the heavenly country (xi. 16), or, the city that hath th foundations (xi. 10); or, receiving the kingdom that cannot be shake (xii. 28); or, entering into the Rest of God (chap. iii. iv.); or, having th world to come put into subjection to them (ii. 5, etc.). This phrase ology rests upon the connection of Israel with Canaan, but as tha connection was not a mere type of spiritual relations (see Note o Rest of God), such phraseology does not imply that nothing mo than spiritual relations is meant. Now this end was contemplate

[1] The promises made to Abraham do not refer to either of the covenants, but something lying beyond them both, to the attaining of which both covenants a but means.

by both covenants alike. Hence "we" have had the same glad tidings preached to us as they (iv. 2). We who believe do enter into the Rest, of which they fell short (iv. 3). They of the first covenant have their transgressions redeemed in Christ, and receive the promise of the eternal inheritance (ix. 15, comp. xii. 40). The covenants are means adopted for realizing promises and gracious purposes, the announcement of which was prior to both of them. The new covenant is only a more effectual means of accomplishing the same object pursued in the first.

A covenant between God and men is a state of relation in which He is their God and they His People. By being His People is meant that they are dedicated to His service (ix. 14), that they are His worshipping People. And the means by which they are translated into this relation of fit worshippers is important. The term that expresses this change is "sanctify" (ii. 11, x. 10, 29, xiii. 12). In regard to inanimate things or creatures not moral, such a dedication to the service of God could have been accomplished by a mere formula of consecration, by setting them apart for God, or calling them His. Not so with moral beings. Both their own conscience and God's nature forbade this superficial treatment. Having a conscience defiled by sin, they felt debarred from free access to God so as to serve Him (ix. 9, 14, x. 2, 22), and for the same reason of their defilement God could not permit Himself to be approached. This defilement of sin is purified away by sacrifice, the blood of which is the blood of the covenant (ix. 14, 18, x. 29, xiii. 20), and thus the People are sanctified for the service of God (see Note on Purify, Sanctify, etc.). As the end had in view and the covenant itself which is the means towards it are alike due to the grace of God (ii. 9), the sacrifice which effects the sanctification of the people is no less an institution of His provision.

Though within the covenant, the People are not supposed to be sinless. They err and are out of the way; they are compassed with infirmity and labour under various "ignorances" (v. 2, vii. 28, ix. 7; comp. iv. 15). Such errors though sins and transgressions (ix. 15), and interruptions of the covenant relation, are not absolutely incompatible with its maintenance, provided they are taken away. A means of removing such sins of infirmity was provided in the sacrificial system. This is the meaning of this system. It was an institution appointed of God for removing sins committed *within* the covenant. In the view of the Epistle sins are of two kinds, sins of infirmity and wilful sins (x. 26). The distinction drawn is not between certain special acts and others, it is a general classification according to the aspect under which sinful acts in general are conceived, although, naturally, certain sins could scarcely be considered sins of infirmity. The general idea of a covenant was that God was drawing near to the People in grace. This general fact demanded, as its correlative, on the part of the People the general attitude toward God of Faith and Hope. Within this general attitude the personal life of the individual might be a very chequered one, full of imper-

fections, and marked even by sins that were voluntary. These were great evils which the covenant relation sought more and more to overcome, but they did not involve suspension of this relation itself. Only unbelief, like that in the wilderness, or idolatry, had this consequence. Such sins struck at a point behind the covenant relation, and threw the sinner outside the sphere within which God was gracious, and for such sins there was no sacrifice (x. 28, xii. 17). For sins of infirmity an atonement was provided in the sacrificial system. Besides particular offerings for special transgressions, the great sacrifice on the day of atonement was an offering for the sins of the People. Besides being an atonement, the ceremonies of this day symbolized the continued existence of the covenant relation between God and the People, for in the *entrance* of the high priest, representative of the People, into the holiest, the presence of God, there were expressed and exhibited the existence and continuance of the relation to God of the worshipping People.—The Epistle does not speculate how it is that men in covenant still continue to sin ; it accepts the fact without referring it to any principle such as "the flesh" of St. Paul. Its distinction of sins of infirmity and "wilful" sins is unknown to the latter Apostle, to whom all sins are deadly and infer the curse (Gal. iii. 10). This is involved in his mode of regarding the Law as a commandment of works to be obeyed in order to justification. Any transgression of it is its breach in principle, and makes an end of all pretensions on man's part to be righteous before God.

The condition of the continuance of the covenant was the keeping of the Law. But here a double defect manifested itself in the first covenant. On the one hand, the people abode not in it (viii. 9), and on the other hand, its institutions could not remove the transgressions done under it (ix. 15, x. 4). In the new covenant God promises to write His law on the People's hearts (viii. 10), as on the other hand the death of Christ redeems the transgressions under the first covenant (ix. 15), and God remembers them no more (x. 17). Though in the new covenant the law be written on the People's heart, their wills are still practically regarded as mutable ; they may sin wilfully (x. 26), and fall away from the living God (iii. 12), and they need all the safeguards which their own patient endurance (vi. 12), the example of those who have gone before (vi. 12, xii. 1, xiii. 7), mutual exhortation (iii. 13, x. 24), memory of past attainments (x. 32, etc.), and the "throne of grace" (ii. 18, iv. 14, vii. 23–25) can afford, to enable them to hold fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end.[1]

Thus the first covenant failed, and God caused to arise upon the people the light of the promise of a new covenant. The first covenant indeed was conscious of its own imperfection ; hence it gave forth from within itself the promise of "another priest" (Ps. cx. 4 ;

[1] The point that in the new covenant the law is written on the heart is not pursued to any consequences in the Epistle ; the antithesis between "letter" and "spirit," "bondage" and "freedom," in the Pauline sense, as characteristics of the two covenants, is wanting.

chap. vii. 14), of a "better sacrifice" (Ps. xl. 7; chap. ix. 23, x. 9), and even of a "new covenant" (Jer. xxxi. 31; chap. viii. 8). The structure of the Tabernacle was a perpetual witness to the inability of its ministry to open the way for the worshippers into the presence of God, a witness borne by the Holy Ghost (ix. 8). And the very continual repetition of the sacrifices year by year was a constant remembrance of sin, and proclamation of their inefficacy to take it away (x. 3).[1]

The Epistle is a detailed contrast between the two covenants, showing that in all those points where the first failed the second realizes the purpose of the covenant. That which gives eternal validity or absoluteness to the new covenant is the *person*, the Son of God, who in all points carries it through—who reveals, mediates, and sustains it. From the conception of the covenant as the state of relation between God and the People who serve Him, the high priest becomes the central figure in the covenant, both as being the minister of atonement and the representative of the People. Hence the Melchisedec high priest in his person and ministry fills all the heart of the Epistle, chap. iv. 14–x. 18 (see Note on the Priesthood). The priesthood is the basis of the covenant or economy, and according to the priesthood so will be the covenant. The Law was given upon the Levitical priesthood (vii. 11), and is virtually the law of the priesthood and its ministry. The Epistle does not contemplate it in other lights or as having other uses or as containing other elements (comp. vii. 5, 16–19, 28, viii. 4, ix. 22, x. 1, 8). The same place is occupied by the Melchisedec priesthood in the new covenant as was occupied by the Levitical in the first (viii. 6). In one point of view, indeed, the sacrifice of the Son is considered more objectively as a death, apart from His priestly activity. In this view it was necessary, as the death of the testator is that the inheritance may pass to the heirs, ix. 16, etc. Thus looked at, His sacrifice corresponds to the sacrifice by which the covenant was initiated, the holy places purified, and the People sanctified for the service of God (ix. 18–22, x. 10). Yet as His death took place for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, this throws it in under that covenant and makes it correspond to the great sacrifice of the Day of Atonement, and it is in this aspect that His sacrifice is chiefly viewed. See the details in Note on Day of Atonement. The "chief point" here is that we have such a High Priest as sat down at the right hand of God (viii. 1); that is, a High Priest who in virtue of His offering has entered into the true heavenly holy place, where God is in truth, and abides eternally before His face, expressing by His entrance and abiding there the realization and continuance of the true covenant relation between God and His worshipping people (x. 19, etc.). By His one offering He has "perfected" for ever them that are sanctified, that is, put them into true

[1] Bringing sin to remembrance is not regarded as the purpose of the legal sacrifices, as if they were thus a schoolmaster unto Christ; rather the continual offering of them is considered an evidence that sin was remembered, and that the conscience of it still remained.

and eternal covenant relation (x. 14, ix. 9, x. 1 ; comp. vii. 11).[1] And those thus introduced into true covenant relation He is able to save unto the uttermost through His abiding intercession, vii. 25. As initiating the covenant through His blood (ix. 20, x. 29), He is the mediator of a new covenant (ix. 15) ; and as sitting at the right hand of God, before His face, for ever, as high-priestly representative of the People, He is the surety of it (vii. 22).

The Old Testament holy places and all the vessels of the ministry were made according to the pattern showed in the mount (viii. 5), and are thus the copies of the things in the heavens (ix. 23). Again, the Law had a shadow of the good things that were to come (x. 1, ix. 11). Thus the first covenant lay, as a sphere of dim representation, between two regions filled with realities,—heaven, the region of the true things themselves, on the one side, and the new covenant, realizing the very image of the good things that were to come, on the other. These two regions correspond to one another (xii. 22). Yet the first covenant having a shadow of the good things that were to come was in truth the introduction of the true covenant, though in a shadowy form. Hence the second covenant, though called new, is new only in a modified sense. The promises on which it was enacted are virtually nothing more than the promise truly to realize the great objects aimed at in the first covenant (see on viii. 6). It contemplates the same end with the first, the bringing of men into the Rest of God and the promised inheritance (ix. 15, iv. 3). And it was made with the same persons as the first. These are the People (ii. 17, xiii. 12), the People of God (iv. 9, comp. vii. 27), or, the seed of Abraham (ii. 16). The Epistle shares the Old Testament conception that the covenant is not made with individuals but with the People. As the new covenant was promised to Israel, Jer. xxxi. 31, it has been made with Israel. "We" who have had good tidings preached to us and do enter into the Rest (iv. 2, 3) ; to whom the words of Ps. xcv. were spoken (iii. 7) ; who are the house of God in truth (iii. 6) ; and apart from whom the fathers were not made perfect (xi. 40)—are the believing Hebrews to whom the Epistle is addressed. The People of Israel as believing is the People of God (xiii. 10). The Apostle has not expressed himself regarding the Gentiles. He teaches, however, that already in Jeremiah's days the first covenant was ready to vanish away (viii. 13) ; that the rise of another priest has set aside the Levitical priesthood, and that with the change of priesthood there goes also a change of the Law (vii. 12), which, indeed, has been annulled (vii. 18 ; comp. his verdict, ix. 8–10, and notes). And in xiii. 13 he exhorts his readers to sever all connection with the Old Testament Israel (see there). The Author has not referred to circumcision. In the circles in which he moved, questions regarding this rite do not appear to have been agitated. Thus no legal barriers remained between the Gentiles and

1 Hence the point at which the new covenant commences is the "offering" of the Son ; this point marks the boundaries of the two ages or worlds, "this world" and the "world to come," in principle, though the world to come is still future in many ways as to actual realization.

believing Israel. And light must have been cast to his mind as it was to others on the wideness of God's purpose by the fact that the Gentiles had largely received the gospel (Acts xi. 17, 18). It is probable, when his view of the unity of the dispensations is taken into account, that he would have regarded Gentile believers not as a separate community, but as grafted into the stock of Israel, the historical people of the covenants.[1]

It is by no means easy to understand what is said in the Epistle in regard to the relations of the two covenants. Two points may be alluded to. 1. The Author speaks in a very disparaging way of the Old Testament sacrifices, saying that they could never take away sins (x. 11), nor perfect those offering them as to the conscience (ix. 9, x. 1, 2), and that they were carnal ordinances and useless (vii. 18). Here he is contrasting the Old Testament sacrifices with that of Christ, and the question before him is, what virtue these Old Testament sacrifices had *of themselves*. Two systems opposed to one another were before him, Christianity with its sacrifice, and an un-Christian Judaism with its sacrifices, and it is of these latter sacrifices in themselves that he speaks and to them in themselves that he denies virtue. Whether these Old Testament sacrifices might have been made the channel of conveying a virtue not belonging to themselves but derived from another source is a question not before him. His language implies that Old Testament saints were burdened with a conscience of sin (ix. 9, 14, x. 2, 22), consequently that they were oppressed by the sense of the inefficacy of their sacrifices to remove sin, from which it seems to follow that they had no clear light as to any connection of these sacrifices with another the virtue of which they conveyed. To the same effect is the view that the transgressions under the first covenant were left outstanding and only removed by the sacrifice of Christ (ix. 15). All this, however, bears directly only on the question before him of the value of the Old Testament sacrifices in themselves, and whether they effected a true objective atonement. Old Testament saints felt they could not do so, and hence they were burdened with a sense of sin which, among other things, manifested itself in a bondage from the fear of death (ii. 15). The other question, whether the want of an objective atonement influenced the divine mind, restraining the free expression of His affection towards men, does not appear to have been present to the Writer's thoughts.

2. Again, when the Author says that blood of bulls could never take away sins (x. 4), and on the other hand that it sanctified in reference to the purity of the flesh (ix. 13), it is certainly very far from being his intention to draw a distinction between one class of offences called "sins" to which the Old Testament sacrifices were inapplicable, and another class that might be named ceremonial defilements which they did remove, and so to erect a general theory of the Old

[1] The idea of a seed of Abraham by faith does not seem to belong to the Epistle; Abraham is not the father of the faithful—the line of faithful men begins with Abel, and Noah is an heir of the righteousness according to faith.

IX. 1 THEN verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances
2 divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was
tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, ar

Testament constitution to the effect that it consisted of two sphere one of ceremonial observances and external government, within whic sacrifices had a real validity, and another the sphere of true spiritu relations to God, within which they had no force. Such a theory wa not present to his mind, though some things said in the Epistle hav suggested it to theologians. The distinction drawn in the Epist between sins to which sacrifice is applicable and those to which it not is quite a different one (see above). The sacrifices were offered fo sins (v. 1, 3, ix. 7, x. 8, 11), and if they could have effected the purpos for which they were offered, the worshipper would have had no mor conscience of sins (x. 2), a condition which the offering of Christ bring about (ix. 14, x. 17). The Old Testament sacrifices could not g *further* than to purify the flesh.

Chap. ix. 1–14. **The ministry of the Melchisedec high priest in contra with that of the Levitical high priest.**

**Connection.**—See Outline at chap. viii. Chap. viii. 1–6 stated th general principle that the Melchisedec priest was a minister of th true Tabernacle, even heaven, and that his ministry was more exce lent than that of the Levitical high priest in proportion as the covenan to which it belonged was better than the first. Then followed th contrast of the two covenants, viii. 7–13. Now comes the contra of the two ministries, ix. 1–14. A ministry consists of three things a place or sanctuary where it is exercised; an offering; and a approach unto God with and in virtue of this offering.

**Outline.**—*First*, the ministry of the Levitical high priest, vers. 1–1 1. Its place, the sanctuary of this world, with its two divisions of th holy place and holy of holies and their various objects of furnitur vers. 1–5. 2. The (priestly and) high-priestly action there an approach unto God—(the priests go in continually into the hol place, but) into the holiest goeth the high priest alone once in th year. 3. The offering—not without blood, which he offereth fo himself and the errors of the people, vers. 6, 7. 4. Estimate of th value of these Levitical offerings and the meaning of the who institution, vers. 8–10.

*Second*, the contrasted ministry of the Melchisedec high pries vers. 11–14. 1. Its place, the true Tabernacle in heaven, ver. 1 2. His action and approach to God with and through his offering- he entered in once for all, ver. 12. 3. His offering—through h own blood, ver. 12. 4. Estimate and illustration of the worth of h offering—he obtained eternal redemption, vers. 12–14.

the table, and the showbread; which is called the Sanctuary.
3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the
4 Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded,

First, **the Levitical ministry**, vers. 1–10.—**Its place**, vers. 1–5.

Ver. 1. *Then verily . . . a worldly sanctuary;* or, **now indeed even the first . . . and its sanctuary, one belonging to this world.** The term *ordinances* implies that the arrangements and actions so called were of divine appointment. "Sanctuary" here seems to mean the whole sacred tent, in both its parts. It belongs to this world, as is elsewhere said, it is of this (material) creation, ix. 11, and made with hands, ix. 24; it is material, of human construction, secondary, and only a shadow of the true, heavenly sanctuary, viii. 5. The Author in saying *had* merely looks back from his own historical position to the Mosaic tabernacle and its ordinances, which are everywhere assumed as the standard of the Old Testament things; the past "had" no more implies that the Old Testament ministry had passed away in fact or even in principle, than the present "go in" (ver. 6) implies the reverse.

Ver. 2. *A tabernacle made; the first;* or, **prepared** (so ver. 6 for "ordained"). "First" means locally first, or foremost. The whole tent was divided into two parts, of which the one was twice the size of the other. Each of these parts is here called a tabernacle, and they are distinguished as *first* or outer, that nearest the entrance, which was from the east; and *second*, or inner, that called the holy of holies, towards the west (see Note on Day of Atonement). To the first or holy place the Author reckons two pieces of furniture—the candlestick, which stood towards the south wall; and the table with the showbread, standing on the north wall, Ex. xxvi. 35. On the candlestick see Ex. xxv. 31–39, xxxvii. 17–24; on the table, Ex. xxv. 23–30, xxxvii. 10–16, comp. Lev. xxiv. 5–9; on the Tabernacle generally, Ex. xxvi.

Ver. 3. *After the second veil*, i.e. **behind**, going in westward from the entrance. The second veil is what is usually called the veil, chap. x. 20; Mark xv. 38; it is called second, because the entrance on the east of the holy place was also formed by a curtain, not a door, Ex. xxvi. 36. On the veil see Ex. xxvi. 31–33, xl. 3, 21.

Ver. 4. *Which had . . . censer;* or, **having . . . altar of incense.** The word used has both meanings, but the latter sense is more probable here, on account of the important use made of this altar on the day of atonement, Lev. xvi. 18–20; Ex. xxx. 10; and though this actually stood in the holy place, the Author fails to mention it when speaking of this. He uses the word "having" in a general sense, not to indicate the local position of the altar of incense, but its close connection with the ministry of the holy of holies on the day of atonement, of which he is speaking. In this he follows the precedent

5 and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim
of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now
6 speak particularly. Now when these things were thus
ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle
7 accomplishing the service *of God*. But into the second
*went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood
which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people

of the Old Testament itself. In Ex. xxv. 23, where the furniture of the holy place is described, this altar is not mentioned, but referred to later, chap. xxx. 1, and brought into connection (ver. 6) with the objects in the most holy place. In 1 Kings vi. 22 it is said to belong to the holy of holies (wrongly in English Version, that was by the oracle). Comp. Ex. xxx. 10; Lev. iv. 7, 18, xvi. 12, 18. Though of shittim wood and merely overlaid with gold, it is frequently named golden, Ex. xxxvii. 25, xxxix. 38, etc. On the ark of the covenant see Ex. xxv. 10, xxxvii. 1, etc. On the pot of manna called here, as in the Septuagint though not in the Old Testament, golden, see Ex. xvi. 32. Aaron's rod, Num. xvii. 1. The tables of the covenant are those of the ten commandments, Ex. xxv. 16, 21, xl. 20, etc.; Deut. ix. 9, x. 1.

Ver. 5. *The cherubims of glory.* The glory is that of God, who dwelt and appeared upon the cherubim. The mercy-seat or propitiatory was the lid or covering of the ark; on either end of it was one of the cherubim, Ex. xxv. 17, etc., xxxvii. 6; comp. 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2. Regarding these things the Author cannot speak particularly, that is, severally.

Vers. 6, 7. **The priestly action and offering in this sanctuary.**

*Now when . . . ordained, the priests went;* rather, **now these things being thus prepared** (ver. 2), the priests **go in** continually. The present "go in" does not imply that the Levitical service still continued when this was written; the present is that of the record in Scripture, for the Author makes no reference to the Temple first or second, confining himself exclusively to the Law as written in the Pentateuch. The ordinary priests, ordinary representatives of the people, have free daily access to the holy place, accomplishing *the service*, rather, **their services**, Ex. xxx. 7, etc.

Ver. 7. *But into the second went . . .;* rather, **goeth**; and so, **offereth**, for *offered.* The high priest alone had access to the holiest and this only once in the year, and then only through blood, which he offered for himself and the errors of the people. The holiest was the dwelling-place of God, where He abode upon the cherubim above the ark containing the principles of the covenant, and access to His presence was virtually denied. The blood was "offered," *i.e.* the sprinkling of it on or towards the mercy-seat was the atoning act Lev. xvi. 15, 34. The archæological question how often *on this day* the high priest entered into the holiest is not referred to by the Author, and is of no manner of interest here, the point being that only once or on one day in the year was access granted to the high priest

8 the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest
of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle
9 was yet standing: which *was* a figure for the time then pre-
sent, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that
could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining

**Vers. 8–10. Verdict regarding the Levitical ministry and its general meaning.**

Ver. 8. *The Holy Ghost this signifying . . . This* which the Holy Ghost signifies, is, that the way into the holiest (that is, the true heavenly presence of God) hath not yet been made manifest, while as the first tabernacle (that is, the outer or holy place) is yet standing. On present tenses see on ver. 6. Whether the meaning be that the Holy Ghost is the Author of the arrangements of the structure itself, and signifies through them to all who will consider them, or is the Author of the Scripture describing them, may be left undecided. The first tabernacle or holy place indicated that the way into God's very presence was not yet open perhaps in two ways. First, though not the very place of God's presence, it was a definite advance toward this; it was at the same time the regular and stated place where the priests, representatives of the people, ministered at all times before God. There was thus a finality and completeness in it, indicating a certain permanence. That it was not all that was to be attained was marked indeed by the high priest's breaking through it once a year into nearer communion with God. Second, the veil, which formed one wall of it, cut off entrance into the holiest; only by its removal, that is, by the destruction of the holy place, could the holiest be thrown open. In this way it was a parable of the whole Levitical system, through which, while a certain access to God was granted, real access into His presence was hindered and deferred till it should be taken out of the way (ver. 9).

Ver. 9. *A figure . . . time then present;* rather, **which** (holy place) **is a parable for the time present.** The Author still uses present tenses, speaking from the point of view of the record in Scripture. The word *then* correctly enough describes "time present" as the Old Testament period, the time prior to the appearance of the High Priest of the good things to come, but must be omitted if the descriptive language of the writer be reproduced. The holy place is a parable, a similitude or symbol; it is this *for*, that is, not for the instruction of, but, *in reference to*, in connection with, the time present, the whole Old Testament pre-Christian age, which is present from the point of view of the recorded Law. This holy place, as an imperfect advance towards the true presence of God, and at the same time an obstacle in the way to it, is an emblem of the first covenant period in service and atonement.

*In which were offered . . . that could not;* rather, **according to which** (parable) **are offered . . . that cannot.**—*Him that did* the service; rather, **him that doth . . .** *i.e.* the worshipper. The gifts

10 to the conscience; *which stood* only in meats and drinks, an
divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on the*

and sacrifices offered are in accordance with the "parable" of t
holy place, they correspond in character with it, being affected l
the same kind of imperfection which it symbolizes. This imperfecti
consists in their inability to make the worshipper "perfect as pe
taining to the conscience"—a phrase in which "as pertaining to th
conscience" defines in what "making perfect" consists, viz. in pur
fying the conscience (ver. 14). The "conscience" is the consciou
ness of the moral character of one's own actions or thoughts, thoug
of course this character of actions and thoughts is determined or
least made clearer by the Law of God. He who is conscious of sin
or dead works has his conscience defiled, ix. 14, or an evil conscienc
x. 22, or a conscience of sins, x. 2. The man conscious of probit
has a good conscience, xiii. 18. To remove this consciousness
sins by an atonement satisfying the mind is to purify the conscienc
ix. 14, or to make perfect as regards the conscience, ix. 9—to attai
to that which is the idea of sacrifice. Old Testament sacrifice
cannot effect this, x. 2; it is effected through the blood of Chris
ix. 14, x. 22.

Ver. 10. This verse requires some change, from the fact that th
best text omits "and" before "carnal," and changes the form of th
word "ordinances," making it descriptive of "gifts and sacrifices
(ver. 9).—Which stood *only in meats*, or more literally, "standin
*only on meats*," etc., *i.e.* not consisting in, but reducible back to, meat
etc., though the sense remains much the same. The words may als
mean: only joined, or added, to meats, etc.; that is, not consisting
meats, etc., but, going along with them, pertaining to one class wi
meats, etc. The whole would read thus: gifts and sacrifices th
cannot make perfect . . . (only going along with meats, etc.), carn
ordinances imposed until a time of reformation.[1]

*Imposed on them . . . the time;* rather, **imposed until a time,** "
them" omitted, and **a time**, owing to the somewhat indefinite outlo
from the Old Testament point of view. The time of reformation
that described in the first words of ver. 11, the time inaugurated by th
offering of Christ, opposed to the time present, that of the Old Test
ment sacrifices. The statements of this passage, taken backward
are mainly these:—1. The Old Testament offerings are ordinanc
having reference to the flesh, and of a class with meats and drin
and divers washings; comp. the parallel statement in regard to t
priesthood, vii. 16. 2. Ordinances of this sort are ineffectual to puri
the conscience and give the worshipper freedom of access into th
presence of God. Such offerings must be provisional and temporar
3. This imperfection of access and service and atonement is chara
teristic of the Old Testament or Levitical period. 4. The Mosa
Tabernacle or place of service is an emblem of this condition of t

[1] Others join "only" with "carnal ordinances"—only (with meats, etc.) car
ordinances; but this seems unnatural.

1 until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an

ld Testament period. Its first division or holy place, the stated phere of Old Testament ministration, though a certain approach to God's presence, is an obstacle to true access, standing as it does efore the holiest and by its veil barring the way to it; only by its re-oval is the holiest thrown open, in other words, only by the removal f the Levitical system is access to God's true presence obtained. Of is removal, however, the system uttered a prophecy, and put forth n effort once in the year towards perfect fellowship with God, in the ntrance of the high priest into the holiest.

It is to be observed that the Author says little of the *holy place;* ne one point of importance to him in regard to this is its *existence*, s the measure of Old Testament attainment, and as an obstacle in ne way of perfection. In the true Tabernacle on high this division f the holy place has no significance whatever; if it be conceived as t all existing, the lines that form it shade away into indefiniteness. he heavenly sanctuary is a holy of holies.—As to meaning, the abernacle, properly "dwelling," is, as its name implies, God's dwell-ng-place among His people. This is the meaning of the Mosaic nd heavenly Tabernacle alike. There He dwelt (Ex. xxv. 8), hence is called dwelling-place simply (Ex. xxxvi. 8, 13, etc.); there He evealed Himself to Israel, hence it is the dwelling-place of the estimony (Ex. xxxviii. 21); there Israel found Him and served Him, ence it is the tent of meeting (Ex. xxix. 42, etc.). How far this welling of God in the midst of Israel, though thus symbolized, was om being conceived in a material sense, appears from 1 Kings viii. 27. s the foundation and condition of God's dwelling in Israel was the ovenant, the ark containing this was His throne. To this throne nce in the year the sacrifice that maintained the covenant relation as brought. More particularly, His throne was formed by the herubim that rose up on either end of the lid of the ark, the mercy-eat; on these He dwelt. The cherubim are everywhere the signs f God's very presence. They bear up His glory, and mediate His escent to the earth, and express His presence there. They are ompared to a cloud on which He rides or enshrouded in which He ts. On the conception of these Beings see Ps. xviii. 10, xcix. 1; mp. 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2; Ps. lxxx. 1; on their service in ediating God's descent to the earth and His movement there, ee Ezek. i., ix., x., xi.; Gen. iii. 24; and hence on the use of gures of them as in the Tabernacle to serve as symbols of His resence, see Ex. xxv. 18, etc., xxxvi. 8, xxxvii. 7, etc.—Thus Satan Gabriel:—

> "Though heaven's King
> Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
> Used to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels
> In progress through the road of heaven star-paved."
>
> —*Paradise Lost*, IV.

High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and mo
perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, n

Second. **The ministry of the Melchisedec high priest** (vers. 11–14).

Ver. 11. **The place of his ministry, the more perfect sanctuary on hig**

*Of good things to come;* rather, the good things to come, *i.e.* th
were to come. There is important testimony in favour of a reading
the good things *that are come.* This reading may be a gloss or
clerical error, but it suggests the right sense, though from anoth
point of view.[1] The "good things" are those immediately connecte
with Christ's ministry as high priest, not things yet future, such
the promised inheritance. This appears both from the language th
Christ is an High Priest of them, and from the connection, whic
speaks of the offerings and ministries of the Levitical and true hig
priests, and of nothing else; comp. x. 1, where the connection is th
same, referring entirely to the *immediate* benefits of sacrifice; an
see x. 14 in contrast with ix. 9.

*By a greater . . . tabernacle,* lit. through a greater . . . It
difficult to say whether *through* is to be taken locally, *passing throug*
or instrumentally, *by means of,* a greater Tabernacle—using in h
ministry a more perfect sanctuary. In the former case, the "tabe
nacle" would correspond to the holy place of the Mosaic tent (com
iv. 14, ix. 2), and be the outer ideal heavens in front of the heave
itself into which Christ entered (ix. 24). In the second case, it woul
be a general term for the sanctuary as a whole (viii. 2). The latt
seems more natural for several reasons:—1. No stress is laid anywhe
upon the high priest's passing *through* the holy place; the point li
in his entering the holiest, though, of course, to do this he had
traverse the first division. 2. Neither is stress laid anywhere on th
existence of a holy place in the true Tabernacle on high. Such
division seems contrary to the idea of it. The holy place belo
existed because of the imperfection of the first covenant and i
service, of which it was the emblem (ix. 8, 9); but as perfection com
through the ministry of the true Tabernacle, there seems no place f
a division, which is still the type of imperfection. Whether this
conclusive or no, it is at least true that if the language used by th
Apostle anywhere suggests a holy place on high, this appears mere
as an undefined foreground to give relief to the true holy of holie
the undivided sanctuary where God dwells in truth, into which Chri
entered (Note on Day of Atonement).

This true Tabernacle (viii. 2) is greater and more perfect than th
Mosaic one; it is not made with hands, not of human constructio
(ix. 24); and not *of this building;* rather, **this creation**—though pitche
by God (viii. 2), it is no part of this material world, whether earth
heaven (unlike the Mosaic, which belongs to this world, ix. 1), it li
beyond the spaces of the created universe of matter. Still, from th
necessities perhaps of the human mind, the Author conceives it as
locality.

[1] Westcott and Hort have admitted the reading into their text.

12 of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves,
but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,
13 having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood

Ver. 12. **The action and offering of the high priest.**

*Neither by the blood;* or, nor yet through . . . The word *through* expresses the means by which the high priest entered. In the going into the holiest, two acts were combined: the bringing of the blood near to the throne of God made atonement, obtained redemption, and in virtue of the redemption obtained or atonement made the high priest as representative of the people was enabled to go in. The high priest below entered through the blood of goats and calves—Christ through His own blood. The high priest went in once in the year—Christ once for all. Once in the year, though in one sense seldom, and though the seldomness and shortness of the approach indicated that the way was not yet open, was in another sense often (ix. 25)—Christ entered in once for all; and as the entering in and appearing before God's face (ix. 25), that is, the opening up and maintaining immediate fellowship with God, was what all priestly ministries aimed at, "once for all" implies that Christ having entered in comes no more out (x. 12).—The *holy place* here means the *holiest.—Having obtained* . . for us; rather, **obtaining,** or perhaps best, **and obtained.**[1] Obtaining redemption was not an act that preceded entering in, they were one act; to enter in was to obtain redemption, though it was at the same time a token that redemption was obtained, and symbolized the continued covenant fellowship.

"Redemption" is properly delivering by paying a ransom price. This literal sense, however, becomes modified through Old Testament associations. The deliverance from whatever it might be was usually accomplished by an offering unto God (comp. Num. xviii. 15, etc.), and thus a sacrifice took the place of a price. It is God to whom that which is the means of redemption is offered; redemption is deliverance through a sacrifice unto God. The use of the term in the Epistle is quite general. In xi. 35 it is simply deliverance from a violent death. In ix. 15 "redemption of the transgressions" themselves is spoken of, a phrase similar to "purification of sins" in i. 3, and the "death" is merely the understood sacrificial means without any idea of a price. In the present passage, in which *for us* is to be omitted, its use is even more indefinite. Thus both the fundamental ideas of the word appear to have become lost, and "redemption" becomes synonymous with other words that describe the effects of sacrifice.—The redemption obtained through the offering of the Son is *eternal.* This is said in opposition to the temporary effects of the Levitical offerings, which had to be repeated year by year. As used in the Epistle the word seems always to express duration, and duration forward (v. 9, ix. 15, xiii. 20), unless ix. 14 be an exception, and hardly conveys the idea of essential or absolute.

1 "Grammar and doctrine equally demand this" (construction).—Prof. Smeaton, p. 380.

of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling
the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:
14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the

Vers. 13, 14. **Estimate and illustration of the worth of the Son's offering.**

The effect of the Melchisedec high priest's ministry was briefly stated in the words "obtained eternal redemption," ver. 12. This statement is now sustained by argument, and by contrasting the Son's offering with the Levitical ordinances. It is probable that in these verses just as in ver. 15, etc., the Author does not adhere to the formal high priestly ministry in the sanctuary, though he includes this, but views the sacrifice of the Son as a whole. A comparison is drawn between the blood of beasts and other purifying media of the Levitical ritual and the blood of Christ. The comparison is twofold—first, as to the comparative effectiveness of the two; and second, as to the sphere within which they are respectively effectual. The blood of goats and the ashes of an heifer purify—much more will the blood of Christ. The former sanctify to the purity of the flesh—the latter will purify the conscience. It is assumed that the Levitical sacrifice purifies the flesh, and it is inferred that much more will the blood of Christ be effectual in the region of the conscience. No account is given how the blood of goats purifies the flesh; it is an understood fact, and on the basis of it the conclusion is laid that the blood of Christ will purify the conscience. It is not probable that the Writer had any particular principle in his mind at the moment. If he had, it is quite improbable that this principle of explanation was merely that such was the ordinance and will of God. To him and to his readers the actual fact was so plain and so much a matter of experience, that the necessity of seeking for a principle did not suggest itself, and most likely no principle was present to his thoughts.

The Levitical media of purification referred to here are two: the blood of goats and bulls,[1] and the ashes of an heifer. The former has reference to the Day of Atonement; the latter to the ceremonies described in Num. xix. A red, unblemished, unyoked cow was slain and its blood and flesh burned to ashes. These were kept in a clean place without the camp, and when any one came in contact with a dead body, an act which occasioned an uncleanness of seven days, he was sprinkled on the third and seventh days with these ashes mixed with running water, and having bathed himself on the seventh day he was again clean. When unclean he was cut off from the religious services of the sanctuary, to which when his flesh was purified he was again restored. To restore one to such fellowship with God is to "sanctify" him; this was the effect of purifying his flesh. "Sanctify to the purity of the flesh" may mean, *sanctify, producing purity* of the flesh, in which case the last words define what sanctify means; or, sanctify *in reference* to the purity of the flesh—defining the sphere within which the sanctity is produced. The latter is more probable

[1] Such is the order of the best MSS.

eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge

Opposed to these, the blood of Christ purifies not the flesh but the conscience; and not from the external defilement of contact with the dead, but from dead works; and this purifying enables the worshipper not to engage in the bodily services of the Tabernacle, but to serve the living God.—On dead works see vi. 1. On the conscience, on ix. 9. On living God, see on iii. 12.—*From dead works* does not mean, so as henceforth to abstain from dead works; for the reference is not to future conduct, but to present burdens lying on the conscience, and disabilities in the way of service arising from the sense of them, just as the Old Testament worshipper was debarred from service by his bodily defilement—the meaning is, purify the conscience, relieving it of that sense of sin which is the obstacle to free service of the living God. Sins forgiven no longer exist for the conscience (x. 2). This parallel between the Old Testament service and that of the New, and translation of the obstacle to service out of the region of bodily defilement into the inner sphere of a man's own consciousness, is very profound. The consciousness and the living God correspond.

The premiss is: If the blood of goats . . . sanctify to the purity of the flesh; and the conclusion is: How much more shall the blood of Christ purify the conscience, so as to serve the living God. Except in the words *blood of Christ*, no ground appears either for the *much more* of this inference, nor for *the conscience*. The next clause may possibly supply the ground.—*Who through the eternal* . . . ; lit. through (an) eternal spirit offered Himself. Points in the statement are: *Himself*, the offering. The Old Testament offerings were goats and bulls, this offering was Christ, the Son of God. Again, *without spot*. This was a requisite in the Old Testament offering, though there referring to the flesh; the requirement is satisfied in Christ's offering, though in Him it refers to His moral being and life. The phrase characterizes Christ's life in the flesh, for it was not Himself in His risen life that He offered unto God, but Himself in His life in the flesh. Another point is no doubt, *who offered:* He was the offerer. If a moral being be the offering, he must offer himself. If he were offered unconsciously, his offering would not be above those of beasts; if unwillingly, it would be below them. It is implied in Christ's being the offering that He offered Himself. Hence in ix. 28 it is said simply that He was once offered. And in x. 5, even where He is said to be come to do God's will, viz. to offer His body, the emphasis falls upon that which is the offering, and the worth of the offering lies there; comp. x. 10.

The phrase, "through eternal spirit," must qualify "offered Himself unto God." It cannot bear upon "without spot" merely, as if it explained how He was without spot. The emphatic point in the whole clause is that *He* was the offering. The phrase might refer to the Holy Spirit, as inspiring Christ and animating Him in all that He did. But such a reference to the Holy Spirit in such a connection is without any point of support elsewhere in the Epistle, which attributes the Son's offering to His own will, x. 7. And no reason can be

your conscience from dead works to serve the living God

assigned for calling the Holy Spirit "eternal."[1] The term "Spirit" must describe the Being of the Son as to its nature, and "eternal" is an attribute of that nature (vii. 3). The words, "through eternal spirit," cannot be meant to suggest the *impulse* under which the Son offered Himself, for an impulse eternal *forward* is an idea out of place, and an impulse eternal *backward* carries the Son's offering of Himself back into a region into which the Epistle does not enter (comp. x. 5, 7). *Through* implies that eternal spirit was the means through which the offering was made. The words might more closely define the agent *who*—who, through His nature as eternal Spirit; acting as eternal Spirit; almost, *as eternal Spirit*. The emphasis on "Spirit" would suggest a number of oppositions to the animal sacrifices, which were all transacted in the region of the flesh. When looked at closely, however, this interpretation rests on the assumption that "spirit" expresses the idea of moral, for undoubtedly what it brings out in opposition to the animal offerings is the moral freedom of the Son, the lofty sphere of being in which as "Spirit" He acted, and the like; in a word, the absolutely ethical character of His act. But the ethical element in the offering is expressed by "without spot," and there is no ground for the belief that the Author used "Spirit" with such a meaning. Besides, on this interpretation no justice is done to "eternal," which remains a mere pointless epithet having no force except perhaps to emphasize the idea of Spirit.

Upon the whole, therefore, the phrase "through eternal Spirit" seems to be of a piece with that in vii. 16, "became priest according to the power of an indissoluble life." The eternal Spirit and the indissoluble life are not identical: the former is the basis of the latter. The expression describes the essential being of the Son, Spirit; and the attribute of it, eternal. This Being, carrying with it an indestructible life, enabled the Son, though dying as an offering, yet as again a living High Priest, to minister the highest act of His own offering in the sanctuary on high.—The clause suggests no explanation or principle of atonement in itself. With the Old Testament sacrifices before him, the Author did not need to seek after a principle. Blood atoned. And the higher efficacy of Christ's blood just lay in its being the blood of Christ (comp. the whole passage chap. x. 5, etc.).

Chap. ix. 15–x. 18. **Through His Melchisedec ministry the Son is the Mediator of a new covenant** (see outline at chap. viii.).

**Connection.**—The connection is with the general statements of ix. 11–14, which are statements of historical facts (vers. 11, 12), the meaning of which is argued and emphasized in vers. 13, 14. The immediate connection is, perhaps, with the last words of ver. 14—how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And for this reason, because it does this, He is the Mediator of a new covenant, He

[1] The ill-supported reading *Holy* Spirit may be due to this feeling.

unds and sustains an eternal covenant; for this is what the new ovenant means, viz. purifying the conscience and removing its sense f sin, and serving the living God. This is the description given of in prophecy: I will write my law in their heart; and their sins will remember no more (Jer. xxxi. 31; chap. viii. 10, etc., x. 15, etc.). he passage ix. 15–x. 18 assumes that the facts stated in ix. 11, 12 are ue, and have the meaning there assigned them and insisted on in . 13, 14. The Apostle nowhere argues that Jesus did enter the eavenly sanctuary. His statement is that these things being true of im, He is through His death the Mediator of the new covenant, to hich the prophecies refer.—The passage falls into two main parts, . 15–28 and x. 1–18. The first starts formally with the treatment the new covenant, but passes gradually over into what is the main ea of the new covenant, the validity and finality of the Son's one ffering of Himself for the putting away of sin. The second part ccupies itself exclusively with this idea of the finality of the Son's ffering, showing how it perfects the people of the new covenant and akes an end of sacrifice for ever.

**Outline.**—Through His high-priestly offering of Himself in the true nctuary, by which He finally put away sin, the Son becomes the ediator of a new covenant, the object of which is that they which ve been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance; and e necessary means to this was the redemption of the trans- essions that were under the first covenant through a death, as has ken place (ver. 15).

2. For such a death is necessary in all covenants. This new cove- nt carrying with it an inheritance may be viewed as a testament; d as the Son had committed unto Him all the arrangements of it, d through Him the inheritance passes unto the heirs, His death is plied, as every case of testament implies the death of him who ade it. And so general is the principle that even the first covenant was t dedicated without blood. For Moses having sprinkled the people th blood drew attention to the meaning of his act, saying, This is the ood of the covenant. In like manner he sprinkled the Tabernacle, e place of service. So that it may be said to be a rule in the Law at all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood no remission (vers. 16–22).

3. And the same principle applies to the new covenant, with the ference that here better sacrifices are necessary in proportion as s covenant is better than the first. The blood of bulls and goats ficed, though it was necessary, for purifying the earthly Tabernacle, e copy of the true; a better sacrifice was needful to purify the avenly things themselves, and dedicate a new covenant—even the ath of the Son (ver. 15). A better sacrifice was necessary, for we

know (comp. ver. 11) that the Son did not enter into the Tabernac
made with hands to appear before God revealing Himself in symb
as the high priest did, but into heaven itself now to be manifested
the face of God for us (vers. 23, 24).

4. And (what may also imply a better sacrifice) His entrance in
the heavens was not often—like the high priest's into the Tabernac
every year with blood not his own—He entered in once for all to off
Himself (comp. ver. 12). For if His entering in and offering had n
been once for all, seeing in order to enter in through His own blo
He must suffer, and seeing His offering was for all the generations
men from the beginning (ver. 15), He must often have suffered sin
the foundation of the world. The history of man would ha
witnessed His repeated suffering and death. But in point of fa
history has seen no such thing. He has been for the first tir
manifested in the flesh at the *end* of the world. At the close of t
world's history He has been manifested to put away sin by H
sacrifice, as He has done (vers. 25, 26). And this finality of His o
offering for sin is corroborated by the analogy of human life. M
die once, and then the other great point in their history is the jud
ment. Similar are the great steps in the Son's history. Havi
been once offered to bear the sins of men, He shall appear the seco
time apart from sin,—in no connection on His part with it,—b
unto salvation (vers. 27, 28) :—

5. Chap. x. 1–18. I say, in no connection with sin, for His o
offering of Himself is final for the putting away of sin and ending
sacrifice for it.

This will appear from the widest survey, whether respect be had
the all-determining will of God, through whom are all things (ii. 11),
revealed in prophecy (vers. 1–10); or to the circumstances of t
Son's offering itself (vers. 11–14); or finally to the terms and meani
of the new covenant (vers. 15–18).

First. The Law having in its institutions only a shadow of the go
things that were to come, could never by any force of repetition
the same sacrifices make men perfect as to the conscience. Su
sacrifices were not in correspondence with God's gracious will (ii. 9)
respect of the sanctification of His people. He willed a better offeri
even that of His Son in the flesh. This became Him (ii. 11). T
will, revealed in prophecy, sets aside the offerings of the Law, a
establishes that of the Son in their place. This will having be
accomplished in the offering of the Son, His offering is final for t
putting away of sin and the sanctification of the people (vers. 1–10)

Second. Another evidence of the finality of the Son's one offeri

15 And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might

appears from its circumstances known to us. The continual standing and offering of the priests shows the ineffectiveness of their offerings. He having made His one offering *sat down* on the right hand of God. By His one offering He perfected them that are sanctified (vers. 11–14).

And, finally, this conclusiveness of the Son's offering, and that it makes an end of all sacrifices for sin, appears from the terms in which the new covenant is spoken of, which His offering inaugurates (ver. 15). For after God has said, This is the covenant that I will make with them, I will write my law in their hearts; then He says, I will remember their sins no more. But remembrance of sins no more implies that they are put away, and that all offering for them has come to an end (vers. 15–18).

Ver. 15. The theme.—**The Son, because His blood purifies the conscience, is the Mediator of a new covenant.**

*And for this reason.* Because His blood cleanses the conscience. The conscience was what the Old Testament sacrifices could not reach (ix. 9, x. 2); it was the point that must be reached, for when it is reached there is "perfection," and the blood of Christ did reach it (ix. 14, x. 22). As the offering of Christ is once for all, so the conscience is "once" purified (x. 2), just as men are "once" enlightened (vi. 4).—*The new testament that;* better, **a new covenant that.** The proposition is stated generally in this verse, hence *a* new covenant, and *a* death.

*By means of death . . .*; or, **a death having taken place . . . first covenant . . .** they which have been called . . . the promise of the eternal inheritance. The verse is very condensed. It states—(1) The object contemplated by a new covenant—that they which have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. This definite promise was already given under the first covenant, the inheritance is always the same. (2) The means by which this object has been attained and necessary in order to it—a death having taken place. (3) The cause of this necessity—the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant. Perhaps when the Writer says, "they that have been called," he has mainly in his mind the Christian Hebrews to whom he writes (iii. 1); and when he says, 'transgressions under the first covenant," he means their sins committed before believing in Christ, and when still under the first covenant. But neither expression is to be thus limited. "They that have been called" embrace also Old Testament saints, and the "transgressions" in like manner include those of saints who died under the first covenant. Christ's sacrifice is retrospective in its power; just

16 receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a
testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of t

men of Old Testament times are through it made perfect (xi. 4
xii. 23); and if the sacrifices of the Law could not remove the tran
gressions of the Hebrews to whom this Epistle was written, neith
could they remove the transgressions of those who had died und
the first covenant.—The first covenant contemplated and promis
the inheritance, but it could not confer it. It was ineffectual
remove the transgressions done under it and give perfection (vii. 11, 1
A death having taken place for the redemption of these transgre
sions, permitted the promise to be realized. This seems to be th
idea here, and scarcely this: that the people were by their transgre
sions under the first covenant involved in its meshes, and that it ha
claims upon them which must be satisfied ere they could be rid of
—although this idea may be true from another point of view.

In one sense the covenants were but one, the first. But the fir
could not realize itself and bring those under it into the ideal co
dition of those in covenant, or perfection. Its institutions were t
weak (vii. 18) for this. It made one great yearly effort in the offe
ing of the Day of Atonement to realize its idea, but with no succes
But the offering of the Son accomplished what the sacrifices of th
day vainly strove after; it brought perfection (x. 14), and enabled th
covenant to issue in the promised inheritance. In this aspect H
offering corresponds to the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement.
another aspect, however, the offering of the Son, seeing it was qui
a different means from those at the command of the first covena
(x. 1, 6, 7), and brought about a new condition by truly putting awa
sin and sanctifying the people (x. 10, xiii. 12), may be said to ha
established a new covenant. In this aspect, the death of the So
corresponds to the sacrifice that dedicates the covenant. It is th
blood of the covenant (ix. 20, x. 29; Zech. ix. 11). The death of th
Son is regarded under both these aspects. On "redemption of th
transgressions," which is not to be rendered, redemption *from* tran
gressions, see on ix. 11.

Vers. 16–23. A death must take place in the case of all covenants

Ver. 15 spoke of a death having taken place; these verses illustra
the necessity of death in order to the establishment and validity
covenants. The word *diatheekee* means both covenant and testamen
and in vers. 16, 17 the Author seems to play on this double meanin
and to use the word in the latter sense. His point is the necessity
a death. A death is necessary in any *diatheekee*, a testamentary or
or one which is a covenant. This *diatheekee* contemplates an inher
tance (ver. 15), and this fact suggests the sense of testament and th
illustration which it offers. In vers. 16, 17, therefore, we must rend
*testament*. The Greek commentators take the word in this sens
which seemed so natural to them that they make no remark on it.

Ver. 16. *Death of the testator;* or, **of him who made it** (not *makes*
The statement is general, and of a fact which any one knows. Th

17 testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18 Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without

general statement is meant to be applied in illustration of the death of the Son (ver. 15).

Ver. 17. *After men are dead*, lit. **over dead.** Here, again, as the Author is illustrating the one point of the necessity of a death, he uses phraseology somewhat indefinite—**in the case of the dead.**—*The testator liveth;* or, **for it is of no force while he that made it liveth.** The words may also be taken as a question: for hath it ever force while —?—In ver. 15 Jesus was called Mediator. This word must be taken in a full sense as meaning one with powers to make the arrangements of the covenant. In ver. 16 He is alluded to as making the testament or covenant conveying an inheritance. All things connected with the making of the covenant or the disponing of the inheritance are put into His hand. In a sense the inheritance which we are to receive was committed to Him by God. Through Him we receive it. And we receive it in the way inheritance is received among men, by the death of Him who makes the testamentary disposition (comp. Luke xxii. 19, 30, 15, 16—I dispone unto you as my Father disponed unto me a kingdom). This is the only idea illustrated. Questions must not be asked, such as, Was Christ really in His own right in possession of the inheritance before His death? or, Did He divest Himself of it when He disponed it to us? The last question shows the ineptness of pressing the analogy beyond the point which the Author means to illustrate.

Ver. 18. *Whereupon . . . first* testament; or, **whence even the first** covenant **was not.** *Whence* does not take up the particular idea of the necessity of the death of the *testator*, but the wider idea of the necessity of death in the case of every *diatheekee.* A testamentary *diatheekee* requires the death of him who made it, to be valid; any *diatheekee* requires a death, whence even the first was not dedicated without blood. The translation must return here to the word *covenant.*[1]—*Even* the

[1] It cannot be denied that to us there is something awkward in the double use of the word; but probably a Greek, to whom the two senses of the word were familiar, would perceive at once from the connection the Author's divergence in vers. 16, 17 to the special sense of testament, and the aptness of the allusion to illustrate the point of the necessity of the death of the Son. The translation of the passage has been very much debated. Those who render "testament" in vers. 16, 17, do so on the ground that no other rendering affords an intelligible sense, and that this meaning is very apt in the connection. The words, where there is a *diatheekee* there must be the death of him that made it (ver. 16), and the similar words in ver. 17, are general statements in which appeal is made to what is universally understood; it is because they are general that they illustrate the point enforced, the necessity of a death (ver. 15). They do illustrate this point if the word means testament.—Others would retain *covenant* throughout the passage, as in vers. 15, 18, mainly on the ground that justice must be done to the Author's language whether we can perceive his drift or not. This is a strong argument in the abstract. When, however, it is asked, What did the Writer probably mean when he said, Where a covenant is there must be the death of the covenanter (ver.

19 blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all th
people according to the law, he took the blood of calves an
of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, an
20 sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This

first covenant, though temporary, and having but a shadow of th
good things to come.

Vers. 19–21. Historical illustrations of ver. 18, from the procedur
of Moses in dedicating the first covenant:—(1) Moses having rea
the law, sprinkled with blood the book and all the people, callin
express attention to the meaning of the act, and designating th
blood as that of the covenant; (2) he sprinkled also the tabernacl
and all the vessels of the ministry; (3) so that it may almost be sai
that all things are according to the law purified with blood, and with
out shedding of blood is no remission (ver. 15).—The narrative is i
Ex. xxiv. 3, etc. Some differences exist between this narrative and th
representation here:—(1) Goats are not referred to in Exodus, thoug
the goat was sacrificed on the Day of Atonement. (2) Sprinkling th
book is not mentioned in Exodus. (3) There is no mention of wate
scarlet wool, and hyssop in Exodus. Fresh water was used on othe
occasions (comp. Num. xix.; Lev. xiv.). A wand of hyssop, a plan
said to be the wild marjoram, was often used in sprinkling (Ex. xii. 22
Lev. xiv. 4, etc.; Num. xix. 6; Ps. li. 9). Purple wool is referred to o
several occasions (Num. xix. 6; Lev. xiv. 4); it was probably woun
round about the end of the wand of hyssop, and thus formed a con
venient means of spirting the blood. The blood sprinkled remove
from the objects sprinkled with it all uncleanness, whether belongin
to them in themselves as in the case of the people, or belonging t
them from being used by sinful men or from coming into contac
with them. Being so sprinkled they were purified, and thus sanctifie
for God's service. The blood, the life, erased or obliterated to God'
sight the uncleanness.

Ver. 20. *Testament;* rather, covenant. Moses drew attention t

16), and, A covenant is of no force while the covenanter or he who made it liveth
the answer hazarded is unsatisfactory. The passage refers to a general fact, whic
it brings to bear upon the particular case of the death of the Son. Now in mo
cases of covenant, God is the Covenanter or He who made it. In what sense ca
His death be said to be necessary? Or if man be supposed the covenanter, wha
is meant by saying, A covenant is of no force while he that made it liveth? Th
suggestion made is this: A sacrifice accompanied the making of a covenant. Th
death of the victim represented the death of the contracting parties. They died—
that is, either they died to the past, old scores were held wiped out and bygone
were bygones; or they died to the future: so far as their action or will was co
cerned the covenant now made would be as inviolable as if they were both dea
—It will take some reasoning, however, to show that the death of the sacrifice i
the Hebrew covenant had any such meaning. And this metaphorical death
the covenanters supposed is quite different from the real death of the Son.—Se
all that can be said in favour of "covenant" said with great candour and abilit
by Prof. Moulton, *Com. on the Heb.* in Ellicott's New Test.; and by Prof. Forbe
*Brit. and For. Ev. Rev.*, Oct. 1876.

the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.
21 Moreover he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle
22 and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood
23 is no remission. *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than

the blood, as the blood of the covenant, by which it was dedicated.

Ver. 21. The actions mentioned here are not referred to in Exodus. The Tabernacle, indeed, was not yet erected. From Lev. xvi. it appears that sprinkling the vessels and the Tabernacle formed part of the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement. It is not certain whether the Author has assumed that what was done on this day every year was done by Moses when the Tabernacle was set up, or whether he follows other traditions, as Josephus appears to do (*Ant.* iii. 8), which attributed these actions expressly to Moses (comp. Ex. xl.).

Ver. 22. *And almost all things;* or, **and one may almost say that according to the law all things.** It may be put as a general principle. *Shedding of blood* may either be slaying or sprinkling. So far as the Author's purpose here is concerned, which is to show the necessity of a death for remission of transgressions (ver. 15), it is immaterial to decide which is meant.

Ver. 23. This verse forms the transition from the illustration of the necessity of the Son's death, which is shown from the general necessity in the case of a testament, and the necessity as seen in the history of the first covenant, to the fact of His death and its effects.—*Patterns of things;* rather, **copies.** What is meant is the Tabernacle, the meeting-place of God and the people, and the vessels of the ministry, the instruments of His service (comp. on viii. 5).—*The heavenly things themselves* are the true sanctuary in heaven and the things belonging to it, of which the things on earth are copies. Blood of calves and goats sufficed, though they were necessary, for purifying the copies of the heavenly things, and inaugurating the first covenant; when the question was of the heavenly things, and a true covenant, better sacrifices were necessary. The Author speaks generally, and therefore uses the plural *these* and *sacrifices.*—It has been thought strange that he should speak of purifying the heavenly things, as if they were defiled. In vers. 19, 20 he speaks of the blood as purifying the people. In ver. 21 he speaks of it as applied to the place of meeting between God and the people. He conceives the heavens, the true sphere of communion between God and His people of the new covenant, locally; and by analogy the heavenly localities, which are to be the sphere of the people's service of God, are conceived as made the object of purification just as the earthly Tabernacle was. But this conception must not be pressed into the positive idea that the heavenly localities were in themselves defiled. They are not spoken of in themselves, but as

24 these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places mad
with hands, *which are* the figures of the true ; but into heave
25 itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us : nor y
that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enteret

the sphere where men are to serve God. As was natural, althoug
the Author imagines the heavenly sanctuary as a locality, his con
ception fluctuates between place and relation. His idea is the ver
profound one, that not only the people, but the sphere and all th
means of their relations to God, and all these relations themselve
must be sanctified by the blood of the new covenant.

Vers. 24–28. Better sacrifices were needful to purify the heavenl
sanctuary itself, even the death of the Son. This sacrifice has bee
made, and has been effectual, for the Son entered as a Priest int
heaven. And He entered there once for all through His sacrific
once for all effected.

Ver. 24. The connection by *for* is with the last words of ver. 23.—
Better sacrifices were needful when the true Tabernacle was to b
purified, the sacrifice of the Son, as has taken place (ver. 15). Tw
ideas are combined : if the heavenly things were to be purified,
better sacrifice was necessary; and, this better sacrifice has bee
offered, evidence of which is the fact, as we know from His ascension
that Jesus entered into the heaven itself.—*Is not entered into the hol
places;* or, **entered not into a holy place, a figure** (lit. *antitype*) of th
true.—*Heaven itself* is the highest or farthest heaven, true abode o
God.—A heaven transcending all created space.—*Now to appea
. . .*; or, **now to be manifested** (to) before the face of God. To b
manifested is to enter into God's immediate and full view; but a
God views immediately the face of the Son, He with equal immediate
ness views the face of God. The word expresses the single act o
entering in and manifesting Himself unto God. *Now* implies tha
this condition of manifestation continues.

Ver. 25. Another point in regard to His offering. As it was a tru
manifestation of Himself as our High Priest before the face of God
so it was an offering once for all.—*Nor yet . . . offer himself ofte
The connection may be : Nor yet did He enter in (ver. 24) that H
should offer Himself often. Or the words may be connected wit
the immediately preceding : Now to be manifested . . . and not tha
He should offer.—The words express briefly that the Son's offering o
Himself is once for all, unlike the high priest's offering, which wa
every year. The general sense is : Nor was His entering in of suc
a kind that He should enter in often to offer Himself like the hig
priest. The meaning of course is not : Nor did He enter in in orde
(after entering in and while there) to offer Himself often. Enterin
in and offering are one act, as the words, "as the high pries
entereth every year with blood," show. What is affirmed is that th
Son's entering and offering was once for all, unlike that of the hig
priest, who entered in every year. This the high priest could d
because he entered in with *blood of others*, or, **blood not his ow**

26 into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to

The Son entered in through His own blood, and His one entering and offering is effectual.

Ver. 26 supports the statement that the Son's entering in to offer Himself was once for all. His entering in, being through His own blood, if it were not once for all, would imply His repeated suffering of death.—*For then must he often have suffered.* This rendering is perfect.—*Since the foundation of the world, i.e.* during the past history of mankind. These last words show that the Author is thinking exclusively of the past, the ages anterior to his own time; he has not in his mind the idea of the Son's suffering in the future, that is, *now* again after His manifestation and ascension in the age then running. His argument is: If the Son's offering of Himself were not once for all, and a thing valid in itself as a single act, then seeing His offering of Himself required His death, for He enters through His own blood, He must often have suffered since the foundation of the world. If His offering of Himself were not independent of time and valid as a single act, if it were valid only for the generation for whom it is immediately made, then in order to benefit men in the past, He must have suffered often, indeed in each generation of the past. And this repeated suffering of His would have been seen. But in point of fact it has not.—*But now once at the end of the world: now, i.e.* as the fact is; He has not appeared in history and often suffered, His first historical manifestation in the flesh has taken place at the end of the world, when the generations of men have been completed—sufficient evidence that His offering of Himself, which is for all generations (ver. 15), is once for all.

*To put away sin . . . sacrifice of himself;* or, through his sacrifice. The words *to put away sin* not only describe the purpose of His manifestation and sacrifice, but affirm its effects. He has been manifested in the flesh for this purpose, and this purpose of God (x. 10) He has effected.—We must remember here the Author's point of view when he says, "at the end of the world." To him and his contemporaries the world in its old form was near its end: the Son's appearance in the flesh marked the close of "this world;" His second appearance, which was imminent (x. 37), would inaugurate the world to come; see on i. 1.—It scarcely needs to be said that "offer himself," ver. 25, refers to the specific act of the high priest in the sanctuary, and that "suffer," ver. 26, refers to the death of the Son. The two are inseparably connected as parts of one sacrificial act.[1]

[1] Ideas quite foreign to this passage have been imported into it. Some have drawn a distinction between "entering in" to the holy place and "offering" there, and supposed that the idea which the Author denied was this, that the Son needed to offer Himself often *after* His once entering into the true holy place and while remaining there. And the argument in ver. 26 is supposed to be this: Seeing every offering of Himself in the holy place must have to correspond to it a

27 put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is ap
28 pointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so
Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto

Vers. 27, 28. Corroboration of the affirmation that the Son's one death put away sin finally from the analogy of human history—men die once by divine appointment, so the Son by His one death removed the sins of men. The verse is closely connected with the words, "to put away sin by His sacrifice," ver. 26. In men's history there are but two great events; they die once, and then await the judgment. The one event closes their history in this world, the other opens their history in the world to come. Such is also the Son's relation to the worlds. He was once offered to bear the sins of many, *i.e.* of men. He died like men, and He died for that end for which He came into this world and became man (x. 5, etc.), and this end He accomplished (x. 10, 14); He bore the sins of men, and this ends His relation to the old world. And as in men's case the judgment opens their relation to the world to come, so His relation to it is that He appears unto salvation.—The second half of ver. 28 is not part of the proof or affirmation, except indirectly, that the Son's one death put away sin. That affirmation is ended in the first half of the verse, and the second half is a glimpse into the future, a glad future that follows on the once final putting away of sin.

*Having been once offered;* who the agents were is immaterial, whether God or Himself or men, the point lies in the fact of His being offered to put away sin and in His having accomplished this.—*To bear the sins of many.* This is the natural sense of the words, *i.e.* to bear the consequences in suffering. Others prefer *to bear away*, in the sense of "to put away" of ver. 26. The latter sense is perhaps more in harmony with other phraseology and modes of conception in the Epistle.—

death, the Son must have throughout history accumulated a number of deaths, in order, so to speak, to give one out with each offering of Himself while abiding in the true sanctuary (Del., Alf.). This idea borders on the grotesque. There is no difference between entering in and offering. The act of entering in and offering is one high-priestly act.—Others have supposed that the argument in ver. 26 for the oneness of the Son's offering is an argument drawn from the absurdity of supposing otherwise, seeing such a supposition requires the Son's descent again to the earth in the flesh, after His entrance into the true sanctuary, in order to suffer, whether in the past, before His historical appearance, or in the future, now that He is ascended. Any reference to the future, however, is incompatible with the words *from the foundation of the world*, which indicate that the Author places the necessity for the Son's suffering in the past, as well as with the words *at the end of the world*, according to which there is no room for a future suffering. To us an argument about suffering in the future, after the Son's historical ascension, might be intelligible; to the Author and his contemporaries it would have seemed out of place. But in the passage there is not the least reference to a descent again out of the sanctuary on high in the flesh. The argument is not one based on the extravagance of this supposition, but based on the facts of history. If the Son's offering of Himself were not valid to put away sin as a single act, then it must have been preceded by many similar acts, which would have been seen. But in point of fact the Son has been manifested in the flesh for the first time at the end of the world,

them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

*Many* expresses simply the positive conception of men in general, as many in number; the idea of exceptions is not suggested by the term. —*And unto them . . . appear.* The statements here are: He shall appear the second time unto salvation; this appearance unto salvation shall be to them that look for Him, those whose sins He has borne here and who continue looking for Him, holding fast their confession unto the end; and this appearance shall be *apart from sin*, in no connection on His part with sin. The last words contain a new implication that sin was put away finally by His first manifestation and death. It is known that He shall so appear, for no one supposes that His second appearance will be in connection with death, and this indirectly confirms the finality of His dying for sin.

*The judgment* is conceived not as something that follows immediately the death of the individual, but as the grand scene that opens the world to come. The correspondence in this particular between the history of men in ver. 27 and that of the Son in ver. 28 is not maintained; the Son is not said to appear as Judge but as Saviour, and not to all but to them that are waiting for Him. This peculiarity arises from the scope of the passage from ver. 15. Its subject is the Son's death as the blood of the new covenant, in which the purpose contemplated is receiving the inheritance (ver. 15) or salvation. The putting away of sin issues in this. Hence the question of the Son's relation to others than those of the new covenant is not before the Author's mind. And equally irrelevant is it whether He or God shall be Judge. He shall appear unto salvation, to introduce the heavenly inheritance, which His once putting away of sin enables men to receive.

Chap. x. 1–18. The point illustrated in these verses is still the point that the Son's one death is a final putting away of sin. But the Author's illustration of this point takes, so to speak, a new start and a wider sweep, bringing in some new particulars of profound meaning, and setting the Son's death in new lights.—The connection is with the last words of ver. 9—I say, apart from sin unto salvation, *for*.

Vers. 1–10, the Son's sacrifice is final for the putting away of sin, for it is the doing of God's final will in respect of sacrifice, according to the words of Old Testament prophecy, superseding all other sacrifices and effecting the true sanctification of the people.

The passage has two parts—first, a preliminary judgment passed on the sacrifices of the Law as ineffective, vers. 1–4; and second, a statement that on this account they did not express God's final will in regard to sacrifice,—His will was the sacrifice of the Son, which takes their place and annuls them; and this sacrifice has been accomplished, and by it we have been sanctified, vers. 5–10.

Vers. 1–4. Preliminary judgment regarding the ineffectiveness of the Law.—The Law had but a shadow of the good things designed by

X 1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and*
not the very image of the things, can never with those sacri-
fices which they offered year by year continually make the
2 comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have
ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once
3 purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But
in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins
4 every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls

God, and could never, by continually offering the *same* sacrifices, make the worshippers perfect by removing their sin (ver. 1). If it could have done so, its sacrifices would have ceased; because the worshippers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sin, and no feeling of need to sacrifice (ver. 2). But that their sense of sin remained is seen from their continuing to offer their sacrifices (ver. 3). And this was natural, for of course the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin (ver. 4).

Ver. 1. *Of good things . . .;* rather, **the good things.** These good things are those immediately connected with sacrifice and priesthood, such as taking away of sin, and perfection, or setting into the true condition of covenant people. The good things are *to come* from the point of view of the Law, not from the Christian point of view; see on ix. 11. Of these good things the Law had in its sacrifices and their effects only a shadow, a dim and unsubstantial resemblance, not the very image or true presentation. It is pressing the term "shadow" too much to find in it the idea that the substantial good things of the New Testament cast before them their shadow in the things of the Old Testament.—*The comers . . . perfect;* lit. **them that draw near** (vii. 25), *i.e.* the worshippers. On *perfect*, see Note to chap. x.—*These sacrifices;* or, **the same sacrifices**; no repetition of the shadow can amount to the substance.

Ver. 2. *Once purged . . . conscience of sin;* or, **once purified.** As there is a single offering for sin, so there is thereby a single act of purifying or cleansing the conscience. The conscience once purified, *i.e.* the consciousness of sin once removed, the people are free from the sense of sin. This of course refers to sin in that sense in which sacrifice removes it, not to sin as a moral condition of the mind. Further, the reference here is to the conscience of the people, because it is the people of God, as a people, that is sanctified (xiii. 12). See on ix. 9.

Ver. 3. *A remembrance of sins;* or, **a remembrance made of sins.** The continual sacrifice was a constant making remembrance of sin, and testimony to the abiding conscience of it, and proof that the sacrifices failed to take it away.

Ver. 4. *Impossible . . .* All this was natural, and could not be otherwise, for the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin.

Vers. 5–10. Such being the ineffectiveness of the sacrifices of the

5 and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when he
cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou
6 wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt
offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.
7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is

Law and the condition of conscience of those under them, it was not the will of God that they should continue. His will in respect of sacrifice was another offering, even the body of Christ, which He prepared for Him (ver. 5). Even the Old Testament itself in the days of the legal sacrifices gave expression to this truth. The word of prophecy, predicting the coming of the Son into the world, and expressing His mind and intention in His incarnate state, represents Him as saying: Sacrifice and offering (such as are offered by the Law, ver. 8) Thou didst not will; a body didst Thou prepare me; and then as adding: Lo I am come to do Thy will, O God (vers. 6, 7). These words of the Son, being the word of God in Scripture, set aside the sacrifices of the Law, and substitute that of the Son in their room (vers. 8, 9). This will of God, the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, has been accomplished, and through it we have been sanctified the people of a new covenant (ver. 10).

Ver. 5. *Wherefore when he cometh. Wherefore, i.e.* such being the ineffectiveness of the sacrifices of the Law and men's condition under it. When He cometh, lit. *coming*, refers to the Son. "Coming into the world" does not seem to refer to the time prior to His coming, or in this case "a body didst Thou prepare me" would not describe anything actual, but only a purpose, which is unlikely. Nor is the reference to the time before the Son's entry upon His official life, as coming into the world could mean entering upon a public career in the world. The words rather contrast the Son's two states, His heavenly and His state in the flesh, and describe Him under the aspect of the latter. No point of time in His earthly life is specially referred to, but the state of His mind or consciousness is pictured towards God, having in it two points: first, Thou didst not will offerings of beasts, Thou didst prepare me a body; and second, I am come to do Thy will (implied in preparing Him a body).

The words quoted are from Ps. xl. 6–8, nearly as found in the Septuagint. First, the Apostle quotes the words, vers. 5–7; and then, as is his wont, reasons upon them, showing their meaning and effect, both backward on Old Testament institutions, and forward in application to his readers, vers. 8–10. The first statement is that God had no pleasure in sacrifice and offering, such as are offered by the Law (comp. ver. 8). This kind of offering was not His will (comp. ver. 7). Opposed to this is the statement, a body *hast Thou prepared*, or, didst Thou prepare, me. It is implied that this body corresponded to His will, and was to take the place of that which he did not will. The first statement is repeated again in a more precise form (ver. 6), in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings Thou *hast*

8 written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when I
said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offerin*
for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*
9 which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to d
thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he ma
10 establish the second. By the which will we are sanctifie
through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for a*

*had*, or **hadst**, no pleasure, vers. 5, 6. Then the Son, having e
pressed what the will of God was, in the words "a body didst The
prepare me," intimates that He is come to do this will—Lo *I com*
or, **I am come**, to do Thy will, O God (ver. 7); comp. ii. 14.

Vers. 8, 9. Now the Author reasons on these words. When it
said of Old Testament sacrifices that God did not will them (ver. 8
and then said that His will was of something else, and that the So
was come to do that will (ver. 9), the meaning can be no other tha
that the first, which is not God's will, is abolished, in order that th
second, which is His will, may be established in its place.—*He take*
*away*, *i.e.* the Son, who speaks throughout; but it is not the Son b
His own authority, it is God uttering in Scripture words that expre
the mind of the Son, coming into the world. Such is the effect
this passage, expressing the will of God, backward on Old Testame
sacrifices.

Ver. 10. It has also an effect forward.—*By which will we are . . .*
rather, by (or, in) which will **we have been sanctified.** "Sanctify"
the Epistle nowhere refers to internal moral condition, but alway
expresses the new relation to God which is the immediate conse
quence of the purification of sins through sacrifice; hence it
spoken of as having been completed through the offering of the bod
of Jesus. The "will" here spoken of is that referred to above. A
the Old Testament sacrifices are abolished by not being the will
God, so that of the Son is "established" by the fact of being H
will; and the words "in which will" are meant to carry the argu
ment that what is God's will will be effective for its end. This w
has been carried out and has been effectual. "Body of Jesus Christ
recalls the words of ver. 5; the fulfilment corresponds to the prophe
and is its fulfilment. "Once for all" goes along with "offering
rather than with "have been sanctified."—The passage x. 1–10 mea
that even in Old Testament times God contemplated in regard
men a better sacrifice than the animal offerings of the Law. Th
sacrifice was the offering of Himself by the Son. And this will
God in regard to the sanctification of His people has been realize
and through it they have been sanctified.

Some points connected with the use of the Psalm deserve notic
1. Whether the Psalm be by David, or, as may be the case, by son
one belonging to a later time, is immaterial. It expresses the min
and feelings of some Old Testament saint, his insight into the u
profitableness of the sacrifices of the Law, and his feeling that t

rue offering unto God must be of another kind. It is spoken by this aint in reference to himself, for the lamentation over personal sins owards the end of the Psalm shows that it cannot be directly Messianic. The Writer recounts the mercies of God unto him vers. 1–5), and then he asks himself the question what he shall ender unto the Lord for all His benefits? This question he answers n the words quoted in the Epistle: In sacrifice and offering Thou idst not delight; mine ears hast Thou opened; burnt-offering and in-offering Thou hast not asked. Then said I, Lo I come with the oll of the book prescribed unto me. I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart (vers. 6–8). The general ense is plain. It is that God desires not and has not asked sacri-ces of beasts, and the Psalmist will not bring them; he will come ot with them, but with the roll of the book, where God's will is made nown to him—a symbol and token that the offering he will render s obedience to the will of God. The phrase, "mine ears hast Thou pened" or dug, means that God had opened a channel into his ind for His will and revelation. It is debated, however, whether ne words refer merely to the revelation of the particular truth about acrifices, in which case the phrase would be a parenthesis standing etween the two similar statements on this point (ver. 6), or contain more general meaning, to the effect that God had opened his ears nce for all, and thus possessed Himself of a permanent channel into is mind for His will, so as at all times to use him in his body as an bedient instrument. This wider view seems to have been taken by ne Septuagint, who render the words: A body didst Thou prepare ne; and is more in harmony with the general scope of the passage.[1] 2. The Psalm contrasts animal offerings with obedience to the will f God (1 Sam. xv. 22). In it this will is God's general will, as con-ained in the volume of the book, His will in all its breadth as made nown to man. The sense of the words as quoted in the Epistle is omewhat different. The contrast drawn there is between animal fferings and the offering of Himself by the Son. And what is said , that God did not will the former, but willed the other, and that the ormer are thereby abolished, and the other is established in their oom, and as the will of God is effectual. The passage in the Epistle far from saying that the essence or worth of Christ's offering of himself lies simply in obedience to the will of God. It does not efer to the point wherein lies the intrinsic worth of the Son's offer-

[1] It is much disputed whether this rendering of the Septuagint represents the riginal text of that version, or be a very early corruption, now disseminated rough almost every MS. of this translation. The greater probability seems to e that it is a free rendering of what the translator conceived to be the sense. The ause rendered in the Septuagint, "in the volume of the book it is written of e," has been referred by the Epistle, in accordance with the sense of the eptuagint, to the mention made of the Messiah in many places of Scripture. he clause might mean, in the Psalm, In the roll of the book it is prescribed unto e, *i.e.* Thy will is laid down for me. The Epistle makes some further changes; rticularly it has omitted the words *I delight*, and thus connected the words *I me* with *to do Thy will*.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering ofte
times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin
12 but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins f
13 ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from hencefor
14 expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by on
offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctifie

ing, or whether it may be resolved into obedience unto God. I
point is quite different. It argues that the Son's offering of Himse
is the true and final offering for sin, because it is the sacrifice whic
according to prophecy, God desired to be made. The fact that it
the will of God, the offering which He desired and which He pr
pared (ver. 5), is the proof that it is final as an offering, abolishi
all other offerings, and sanctifying the people of God. There ma
also lie in ver. 10 the additional idea that God's will directed toward
the sanctification of His people has found satisfaction in it.

3. When the Apostle puts the words of the Psalm into the mout
of the Son, it is not his meaning that the Son was really present
the Old Testament church and spoke the words. The words are H
words coming into the world. They are words of prophecy, spok
beforehand with reference to the Son, and expressing that mind a
will which He had when coming into the world. They are not co
sidered words spoken by another in regard to his own mind, whic
the Son takes up and uses in their full meaning of Himself. Th
typological view, as it is called, may be quite compatible with t
Author's view, but such a typological view was not before his min
His typology is limited to the Tabernacle and the priesthood. The
and their arrangements and ministry are typical, or, as he prefers
call it, anti-typical (ix. 24) of the things of the new covenant, but a
Messianic prophecy is treated by him as direct. This arises from h
looking at Scripture as in the strict sense the word of God, and pr
phetical, or spoken with a view to the Christian economy. Scriptu
may have other aspects, but this is the sole aspect in which
regards it (see Note on the Word of God).

Vers. 11–14. Another evidence that the Son's offering is the tr
and final offering for sin—having made it, *He sat down* on the rig
hand of God.

That the ministry of the priests under the Law is ineffectual is se
from their continual standing and offering (comp. ver. 2). That t
Son's is effectual appears from the fact which we know from prophe
fulfilled (Ps. cx. 1; chap. ii. 9, viii. 1) in Him, that having made His o
offering He sat down. He ceased and no more offers, but awaits t
final issue of His one offering, which shall be when He appears t
second time unto salvation (ix. 28).—The punctuation of ver. 12 ma
be: one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down; or, one sacrifice for sin
for ever sat down. His offering hath perfected the sanctified, for th
it has been effectual is proved by His sitting down and no more offe
ing, as on the other hand it must have been effectual or He could n

5 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that
6 he had said before, This *is* the covenant that I will make with
them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into
7 their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their
8 sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where
remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin.

ave sat down.—The language here differs from that in ver. 10. The eference in vers. 1–10 was rather to the material of the Son's offering s unlike that of those of the Law (comp. *same* sacrifices, ver. 1), and he proof for the finality of the Son's offering was the identification of t with the will of God expressed in prophecy. Here the proof is ather drawn from the historical circumstances of the Son's offering nown to us. Again, it was said in ver. 10 that through His offering ve have been sanctified; here that by His one sacrifice He hath per-ected them that are sanctified (not *have been* sanctified, see on ii. 11). The different language seems to correspond to the two aspects under vhich the Son's offering is regarded: as the blood of the covenant, and s the offering of the Day of Atonement. As the first it sanctifies; s the other it perfects (vii. 11, 18). To perfect is to bring into the rue condition of those in covenant. The sacrifice of the Day of Atonement was a yearly effort to effect this, but in vain. The Son's offering both sanctifies and perfects; it does both at once, for to do he first fully is also to accomplish the other. The two differ only as vays in which His offering may be viewed. But His one offering gathers up into itself both the sacrifice that inaugurates the covenant, nd all the many sacrifices offered year by year to maintain it and to ealize it; it reaches the idea which they strove towards in vain, and y reaching it for ever sets them aside.

Vers. 15–18. And further evidence for the conclusiveness of the Son's offering is found in the words of the Holy Ghost, in prophecy, s already cited (chap. viii. 7, etc.; Jer. xxxi. 31). For, when describing he new covenant, after saying, This is the covenant that I will make vith them, I will write my Law in their hearts, God saith, And their ins will I remember no more (ver. 17). But remembering sin no nore implies that it is finally put away (comp. ver. 3).

Ver. 15. *Whereof the Holy Ghost;* rather, and the Holy Ghost. The words afford an additional evidence. The sentence formed by hese verses in English is incomplete. It is probable that before ver. 7 some such words as *then he saith* should be understood. The assage, ix. 15, etc., began with showing that the offering of the Son eing a final putting away of sin, was the dedication of a new cove-ant. This precise idea gradually assumed the form of an illustration f the finality of the Son's offering, with the consequence that it uperseded all other offerings (ix. 25–x. 18). Being the foundation of new covenant, all sacrifices are superseded by it; for this is expressly ntimated in prophecies regarding the new covenant (ver. 17): where ins are put away there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.

## NOTE ON THE MINISTRY OF THE HIGH PRIEST ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

It should always be borne in mind that admittedly this Apostl mode of viewing the Christian salvation is marked by distinct chara teristics. We should approach the Epistle, therefore, with minds much as possible cleared from thoughts suggested by other Aposto writings, and prepared to meet not indeed new Christian truths, mu less new facts, but a different way of looking at truths common to the sacred writers. The Author approaches the atonement not St. Paul from the forensic or judicial side, but from that of ritual worship, and consequently the Epistle is largely a parallel or contra between the Old Testament sacrificial ritual and ways in whi the death of Christ may be viewed. The culminating point of t Old Testament ritual was the sacrifice on the Day of Atonemer Here the high priest took part, and the atonement was for the si of the People. And it is with the ministry of the high priest on th day, in its place, action, and offering, that the high-priestly minist of our Lord is chiefly compared.

This, however, is not the exclusive line of comparison followe The object of the Author was not so much to institute a strict logic parallel between the two ministries, as to seize upon everything in t Levitical ritual that was significant to the Old Testament worshipp and show how it had something corresponding to it, and of far high significance, in the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ. Several co sequences follow from this wide purpose. While his typology mair runs upon the line of the high priest's ministry in the holiest, to whi Christ's offering of Himself is parallel, the Author combines with th ministry other Old Testament ceremonies that have no immedia connection with it, such as the ceremony with the ashes of the r heifer (ix. 13), and the sacrifice that inaugurated the covenant (ix. x. 29), to all of which the sacrifice of Christ affords an analogy. even throws out fragments of what might be called other typologic systems, that cannot be harmonized with the main system of the D of Atonement nor fitted into it. For example, the comparison of t veil to our Lord's flesh or human nature (x. 20), which had to be re ere entrance could be obtained into the holiest in the presence God, a profound and beautiful thought, containing a typology in its is one that cannot be adapted into the main typological sche pursued, but lies quite outside of it. Similarly the comparison of t death of Jesus outside the gate to the burning of the remnants of t sin-offering without the camp (xiii. 11) is one that quite disjoints t ritual of the Day of Atonement. For the suffering of Christ certai took place before His blood entered into the holiest, while the bu ing of the sin-offering followed the bringing in of its blood by t high priest. The comparison indeed is a mere isolated analo intended to point a lesson (xiii. 13); and however deep the truth which it suggests, it cannot be made a link in the typological cha

of the Day of Atonement. This combination of elements in the Old Testament ritual that are independent though of the same general meaning, prepares us to find a similar grouping together of points connected with the offering of Christ. In such a scheme prominence will be given to those events that find a parallel in the Old Testament ritual, such as Christ's entry into the sanctuary on high, while other things, such as the resurrection and forty days' sojourn upon the earth, having no analogy in the Old Testament ritual of worship, are passed over.

The Old Testament sacrifice was the offering of a victim through death unto God. In the New Testament the death of Christ is compared to this. The comparison is made in two ways. For the most part nothing but the general idea enters into the comparison—the offering of a life unto God. The New Testament writings in general make no reference to any *place*, such as the Tabernacle or altar or mercy-seat; nor to any action, such as entering into the holiest. The act of the sacrificial death alone is alluded to. The altar might be the cross, the sanctuary the high dome of the world, everywhere filled by God's presence; but such accessories were not in the writers' minds. But in this Epistle another method is pursued. A close parallel is drawn between the elements of the Old Testament ritual of worship, in its officers, place, action, and offering, and the things of the New Testament, which correspond but are more excellent. This arises from the Author's conception of religion as a covenant, or state of relation between God and a worshipping people, in which necessarily the high priest occupies the place of pre-eminence. And it is under this aspect that he presents the Christian atonement. And this is a complete and distinct method of presenting it. But the method of the other New Testament writers is also complete in itself. The two methods do not supplement one another. Fragments of the one must not be thrust into the other. The two methods are to be compared, not identified or confused. To most New Testament writers everything connected with the sacrifice of Christ was accomplished on the cross; this corresponded to the whole process and circumstances of the Old Testament offering. And if they do not speak of entering within the veil, or sprinkling the mercy-seat, or other priestly action, the reason is not that they have left over these things to be added by another, such as this Writer, in order fully to express their system, but that these things have no place in their system. With this Epistle, on the contrary, every element of the ritual is significant, and that which to most New Testament writers is contained in the death alone is spread over a series of acts, the essential one of which is entering into the holiest before the face of God. Hence while to St. Paul the resurrection occupies so high a place, being that which authenticates the Messiahship of Jesus and interprets His death, in this Epistle the resurrection occupies no place, and is only once, or at most twice, alluded to, the fact of importance being the ascension into the presence of God, because that act was both to obtain eternal redemption and the guarantee that eternal redemption had been obtained.

THE COPIES OF THE THINGS IN THE HEAVENS.

A, the first Tabernacle (holy place); B, second Tabernacle (holy of holies). the candlestick; 2, the table and showbread; 3, the first veil (hanging); 4, th second veil (the veil); 5, the altar of incense (golden altar); 6, the ark of th covenant, and mercy-seat with cherubims (having pot of manna and Aaron's roc —the throne and very presence of God.

Christ is an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec (v. 20 The chief point of the Apostle's teaching is that Christ is a ministe *i.e.* an officiating High Priest of the true Tabernacle which the Lor pitched, not man, that is, heaven (viii. 1, 2, ix. 11). Being a ministe there, He must like other high priests have an offering (viii. 3). Hi offering must be in the true Tabernacle, the heavens, otherwise will be no true atonement, for there is God's true presence, befor whom it must be brought (viii. 4–6). His ministry corresponds t that of the high priest. A ministry consists of three things: a plac of ministration or sanctuary; priestly action there and an approac unto God; and an offering or sacrifice. The ministry of the ordinar priests is not here important: the priests go in continually into th first Tabernacle, accomplishing their services (ix. 6). The compar son lies between the ministry of Christ and that of the high priest into the second goeth the high priest alone, once in the year, nc without blood, which he offereth for himself and for the errors of th people (ix. 7). Corresponding to this: Christ, an High Priest of th good things that were to come, through a greater Tabernacle, an through His own blood, entered in once for all into the holiest, an obtained eternal redemption (ix. 11, 12).

The points of contrast are these: 1. Aaron an high priest obtai ing by his ministry benefits that were only shadowy and unsubstanti (ix. 9, 10, x. 1); Christ an High Priest of the good things that we to come (ix. 11). 2. Aaron exercising his ministry in the Tabernac of this world (ix. 1); Christ exercising His by means of a mo perfect Tabernacle, not of this material creation (ix. 11). 3. Aaro offering blood not his own, that of calves and goats (ix. 7, 12, x. 4 Christ entering in through His own blood (ix. 12). 4. Aaron enteri in once in the year into the holiest, for a moment, the veil closi behind him again when he returned, and obtaining no true a permanent access to God (x. 1–4, 11); Christ entering in once f all into the holiest, from which He comes no more out,—for to ent

into the true holiest with His offering is to obtain eternal redemption (ix. 12–14, x. 10, 14, 18), and in virtue of the redemption obtained He is enabled to enter in, and there to abide for us, the surety of an eternal covenant (vii. 22, ix. 24, x. 19): Having offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, He sat down on the right hand of God.[1]

This comparison speaks for itself. No mind but one already possessed by preconceptions derived from other sources or suggested by itself could fail to perceive that what is here exhibited is no solemn scenic repetition on a higher stage of the drama of the Atonement already enacted elsewhere, but the culminating scene of that very drama itself.

The Apostle follows closely the steps of the Old Testament ritual, and a few points in this, which may almost be called ritual axioms, have to be remembered.

(*a*) The blood makes atonement. This it does in virtue of being the life or soul, or in virtue of the life being in it, Lev. xvii. 11, etc. The question what "atonement" is, is not important here.

(*b*) The altar is the place at which any "offering" is made to God, the point where it comes into relation with Him. To offer on the part of men and to receive on the part of God are but different sides of the same action. When a gift touches the altar it is both offered and received—till it is laid on the altar it is neither offered nor received. The victim was not slain on the altar (Lev. i. 3, 11), its life was not "offered" till the blood which is the life was laid upon the altar. There were various altars, that of burnt-offering in the court, that of incense in the outer Tabernacle, and the mercy-seat in the inner sanctuary. All these were used on different occasions, but the principle is the same in regard to all—the altar is the place where men offer and God receives the offering.

(*c*) If a living gift be offered unto God, its death must necessarily take place, otherwise it would not be made over unto God, but

[1] Here, perhaps, is to be found the true answer to the suggestion thrown out by Witsius and the Dutch theologians (see p. 153, note 2), that the Son's entrance into the holiest through His own blood is not to be identified with His ascension, but was an act performed by Him in His disembodied state in immediate temporal connection with His death. Such an act would imply that having entered the true holiest He again left it. But it belongs to the very idea of a true atonement for sins that the high priest going into the presence of God comes no more out, but there abides before the face of God for us. His abiding maintains the way open for us (x. 19), and the act of atonement has to become through the interceding high priest salvation unto the uttermost (vii. 25). The earthly high priest returned from the holiest because his entrance was not really into the presence of God. It was only prophetic and for a moment in symbol. His return belongs to the *imperfections* of the Old Testament ritual, and cannot find anything to correspond to it in the case of the true High Priest.—Further, the Epistle certainly seems to know of only one entrance, an entrance followed by sitting down at God's right hand (i. 3, iv. 14, vi. 20, ix. 11, 12, 24, x. 12); in ix. 12 the Son "entered in once for all into the holiest," and in ix. 24 He "entered into the heaven itself now to be manifested before the face of God for us."—And it seems altogether improbable that the Author should teach that the essential part of the atoning offering of the Son, or any essential part of it, was performed by Him when He was dead (see notes on vii. 16).

remain in its own possession or in that of its owner. Various theories of the meaning of sacrifice prevail, but even here the question is not of immediate consequence. Sacrifice is the offering of a living victim or of a life unto God, and the death of the victim must necessarily ensue.

(*d*) Now if the victim could have been brought and laid living on the altar, and in the act of laying it had been stricken by death, the whole act of offering would have been performed at once and been seen in its completeness. Hence it might be supposed that the one act was broken into two, the slaying and the offering of the life, the blood from the exigencies of the case. Whatever there be in this, the ancient command not to eat the flesh with the life or blood, that is without offering the blood or life to Jehovah (Gen. ix. 4; Lev. xvii. 10, etc.; Deut. xii. 23; comp. 1 Sam. xiv. 33, etc.), shows that the warm fluid blood was at all times considered the life of the creature. It was not a symbol of the life, but the life itself. And the offering of the life was the sacrifice. There is not the slightest hint anywhere in the Old Testament that the life laid upon the altar in the shape of the blood differed from the life when it flowed in the veins of the victim, or that the slaying had in any way changed its character. The blood was the life, and the laying of it on the altar was the atoning act, and what was laid on the altar was the blood that atoned, not the blood after atonement had been made.[1] Any theory, therefore, which separates the death from the offering at the altar is false to the idea of the ritual, whether it lays all the stress on the death as the atoning act, and puts some other meaning on the offering at the altar, or lays all the stress on the offering at the altar and regards the death as a mere necessary unmeaning preliminary. The first view is opposed to the radical conception of the ritual according to which no act is of the nature of an offering unto God which is not done at the altar, at which the death considered by itself did not take place; and also to the language of the Old Testament, which says that the blood atones. The second rests on the false view that the blood offered at the altar is not the life, but a symbol of the life.—The whole sacrificial action, death and offering of the blood, is one.

The sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was more, however, than an offering for sin. It was a great covenant offering,—for the People in covenant. And in the entrance of the high priest, representative of the People, into the presence of God through the blood of the offering, was expressed the continued covenant fellowship between the People and God.

The application of the above-mentioned points to the offering of the Melchisedec High Priest in the true sanctuary, into which He entered, and where He abides as the surety of the eternal covenant, does not need to be made.

1 For a different view see Fairbairn's *Typology*, ii. p. 314. The rather artificial theory there given is an attempt to combine the ordinary view with that of Bähr—iron and clay.

The local and realistic conception of the heavens and the heavenly things, which is a characteristic of the Epistle, has given rise to the question whether this conception be merely in a stronger form a mode of thinking common to other Hebrew writers (Ps. xi. 4, xviii. 6, xxix. 9; Mic. i. 2, etc.; Gal. iv. 26), or whether we may not find traces in it of philosophical theories, and something like an identification of Christianity as the realm of realities and absolute truth with the ideal world of the Alexandrians. It is probable that the Author was familiar with this notion, and that it has influenced his language, and perhaps to some extent his ideas. That he identifies Christianity with the ideal world of the philosophers can hardly be said. The most that he has done, if he has done so much, is to seize the barren and empty abstractions of the intelligible world and vitalize them, filling them full of moral force and bringing them forth out of the region of transcendent existence into the life of man. He does not identify Christian truth with an already existing system of thought: his Christian thought merely possesses itself of the outlines of a mode of conception existing, which it fills with its own contents. If this be the case, it is but an early example of that which Christianity has been ever doing, and what it must ever do. It will not overcome the world by annihilating it, nor human nature by obliterating it. To conquer is not to destroy, but to possess and inspire. The faith of Christ will conquer human thought and art and life as man conquers nature, which he does by possessing himself of it and using it, filling out its laws and forces with his own spirit, and making even its mechanical movements pulsate with a human heart.

In the Epistle the heaven or heavens are: 1. The material heavens, i. 10, xi. 12, xii. 26. Nothing need be said of this. 2. It is said that our great High Priest passed through the heavens, iv. 14, that He was made higher than the heavens, vii. 26. 3. It is said that He sat down in the heavens, viii. 1, i. 3, x. 12, and entered into heaven itself, ix. 24. Here heavens through which He passed are distinguished from heavens in which He sat down. Those highest heavens into which He entered constitute the abode of God (ix. 24). They correspond to the holy of holies in the earthly Tabernacle, vi. 20, ix. 12, 24. The holy of holies was a copy or antitype of these highest heavens, and made according to the type seen in the mount, viii. 5, ix. 24. It is less certain whether the Epistle means that the lower heavens through which Christ passed into the holiest correspond to the holy place in the Tabernacle, iv. 14. See notes on ix. 11. These lower heavens are of course immaterial, not belonging to this creation. If there be such a correspondence, it is only slightly touched upon: the holy place has no existence strictly in the heavenly sanctuary, the veil is torn aside, and the whole is a holy of holies, God's true dwelling-place. From a comparison of ix. 2, etc., with ix. 23, it appears that to the Author's mind the correspondence between the heavenly and earthly sanctuaries extended even to the things or articles contained in them. Elsewhere he speaks of a Mount Zion above and a heavenly Jerusalem, xii. 22.

What is to be sought, first of all, is the Apostle's *idea*. This is undoubtedly that "heaven," in opposition to this phenomenal world, is the region and abode of that which is real. There is God's presence and there are all those things that cannot be shaken but abide forever, things in their ideal truth. When he speaks of God being in the heaven itself, he makes an effort to express the Majesty of God: to say that He transcends all that is creaturely, and that in Himself He is removed far back of all created worlds, and exists in heaven as He is in Himself. When he says that Christ made His offering in heaven, he seeks to express the idea that it was an ideally true and valid sacrifice. When he says that through His blood He entered into the holiest, he expresses the thought that Christ's offering came into immediate relation to God and was an absolute atonement. When he says of the Son that He entered within the veil and sat down in the heavens themselves, he means that He entered into the very communion and presence of the Being of God, and, as representative of the People, embodies the eternal covenant. In like manner when he says of Christians that they have confidence to enter into the holiest through the offering of the Son, he expresses the idea that they have access to God as He is in Himself (iv. 16, x. 19, etc.). And when he says that they are partakers of a heavenly calling (iii. 1), that they are come to the heavenly Jerusalem (xii. 22), and the like, he expresses the conception that the absolute and final truth as to God's relation to men has been revealed, and that the eternal condition of things is about to be realized. And much more of the same kind.

While this is the idea lying in all this, it must be conceded that the Author's *conception* of the heavens and what has its abode there is of localities and real things. God's presence is locally conceived. The holiest is a place (comp. the antithesis in viii. 4). This conception must be entered into, to begin with, if the Author's meaning is to be reached. The words "within the veil" and "in the heaven itself" do not express a mere relation. All this may be but illustration of the incapacity of the Oriental mind to entertain abstract conceptions: the imagination seizes them and turns them into places and things. It is natural to the mind so to think of God and heaven, when not formally observant that it is such things that it is thinking about. That the Apostle's own mind fluctuated between ideas of relation and localities perhaps appears when he says of us that even here we may draw near to the throne of grace (iv. 16), and enter into the holiest (x. 19), and that we are come to the heavenly Jerusalem (xii. 22). Still he draws a distinction between the sense in which this is true now, and the sense in which it shall be true when the heavenly world is revealed at the coming of the Son.

The chief advantage arising from entering into the Apostle's mode of conception is that it enables us to put a right construction on some expressions which he uses. God is not His own place, He is in a place, the holiest on high. Into that place the Son entered to be manifested before His face. Into that place also believers enter. Al

are in one place. The sphere of fellowship with God is the sanctuary on high. This sanctuary has now no divisions. God is not present in the holiest, manifest truly only to Himself, while the church and the tens of thousands of Angels congregate in the holy place, having a fellowship with Him which is only mediate. The simplicity of the Epistle knows of no manifestation of God which is not immediate to those around Him. If there be any distinction between Mount Zion and the heavenly city, it is not that the one lies outside of the other, but that the latter lies around the former. Again, as the sphere of communion between God and the People is a place, the holiest above, such conceptions as that Christ's Person is the mystical sphere of communion are precluded. Such conceptions may have profound truth and a place elsewhere; they do not belong to the Epistle. Through His blood believers have confidence to enter into the holiest (x. 19), and through Him as High Priest they offer continually the sacrifice of praise (xiii. 15).

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## NOTE ON THE WORDS PURGE, SANCTIFY, MAKE PERFECT.

The object of the following remarks is mainly to indicate the distinctive meanings of these words, not to enter into the doctrinal questions connected with them.

The general conceptions of the Epistle are to be observed. It conceives the relation of God and men under the form of a covenant, that is, a state of relation in which He is their God and they are His People. The People of God is not a number of individuals, as when we speak of "people;" it is a unity such as Israel was. This unity continues. The covenant union is strictly a religious one. God is the living God, who is to be worshipped or served (ix. 14); and the People are His worshippers or those who draw near to Him (x. 1, 22). God is not conceived as a king or a righteous ruler or lawgiver, whose law is to be obeyed, and the relations between whom and men are to be settled on judicial or forensic principles. He is God to be worshipped by His People, drawing near in all the exercises of service to His throne, and what has to be sought is the means to this: on the one side, that He should be enabled to receive and have fellowship with His People drawing near to Him; and on the other, that they should have confidence to draw near (x. 19). Israel became once for all the People of God in the first covenant. It was recognised that the People though in covenant was not sinless. Sins against the covenant itself were followed by cutting off from the People. For sins of infirmity there was forgiveness. For such sins, though for these only, there was sacrifice (comp. x. 26). Even such sins occasioned a temporary interruption in the covenant fellowship, but did not infer its absolute suspension. Besides particular offerings for individual offences, the great sacrifice on the Day of Atonement applied to the sins of the People as a whole. And in the entrance of the high priest with blood into the holiest before God as representative of the People, was embodied the fact of the continuance of the covenant fellowship

of the People with God. Yet these Old Testament sacrifices neve
could take away sins (x. 4). The transgressions under the first cov
nant remained outstanding (ix. 15). The yearly ceremony was b
piece of symbolic acting, having no real validity in itself; the La
made nothing perfect (vii. 18). But Christ having come an H
Priest of the good things that were to come, entered in once for
into the holy place and obtained eternal redemption (ix. 11).
death redeemed the transgressions under the first covenant (ix.
Thus it may be said that the first covenant realized itself. T
realization, however, is called a new covenant (see on ix. 15, viii.
But the People remains the same. The People of God is Chris
Israel. And the great idea of the Epistle, written to Chris
Hebrews, the People of God, but in a state of mental instability fr
insufficient understanding of the high-priesthood of Christ, is, tha
the true state of covenant relation between God and the People ha
come into existence and exists, and that it is in fact realized an
expressed in this, that the great High Priest, Representative of
People, sits for ever at God's right hand before His face (ix. 24, x. 1
But though its great purpose be to insist on this fact, it also indic
the steps that led to its being realized. And the above three wo
are important in this connection.

1. **Purge**, or better, **purify** (or, cleanse). The following passa
illustrate the use of the term. Chap. i. 3, having made purificat
of sins He sat down at the right hand of God. Chap. ix. 14, if t
blood of bulls sanctifieth in reference to the purity of the flesh, ho
much more shall the blood of Christ purify your conscience from dea
works for the service of the living God. Chap. ix. 22, one may almos
say that all things according to the Law are purified with blood
and without shedding of blood is no remission. Chap. ix. 23, it
necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should b
purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with bette
sacrifices than these. Chap. x. 2, for then would they not (the Old Testa-
ment sacrifices) have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers
once purified would have had no more conscience of sins. From
these passages it appears—(1) That what made purification necessar
was sins, dead works, a conscience of sins, etc.—that is, sins of th
in covenant, which caused an interruption of the covenant fellowsh
of God and the People. The sins themselves are purified, so is the
conscience (otherwise, the heart from an evil conscience, x. 22), also
the heavenly things, and the copies of them, and even the flesh.
(2) The medium through which purification of all these is effected is
blood or sacrifice. (3) On such a sacrifice there follows remission
(comp. x. 18). (4) True purification, whether of sins or the conscience
or of the heavenly things themselves, has been effected through the
blood of Christ. (5) The object aimed at through purification is the
service of God. Though this is the purpose of purification, the idea
of service is not contained in the word itself.—Now to state these
things is almost enough. The Epistle uses the term purify in a wide
way to express generally the effects of sacrifice. In this general use

it had been preceded by the Septuagint. The conception is local. The defilement is regarded as adhering to the body, the conscience, or the heavenly things, or the copies of them, and by the sprinkling with blood (x. 22) it is removed. Whether the idea be that the blood erased the defilement or covered it from God's sight is uncertain. Neither is it necessary here to raise the question of principle; the Epistle reposes on the Old Testament practice, which it transfers into the Christian sphere. The fact that purification is through blood or sacrifice is common to both spheres. The reason why the first covenant by its institutions failed to remove sins, was not that it used blood as a medium of purification, but that it used the blood of beasts (x. 4); the blood of the new covenant sacrifice is effectual because it is the blood of Christ (ix. 14).

The sins or dead works of those in covenant caused an interruption of the covenant fellowship with God, making it impossible till they were removed. This impossibility has two sides. It is an objective one, lying outside of the mind of the person or the People; and it is also internal, lying in the conscience. The external obstacle is on the side of God. This is graphically exhibited in the ceremony of purifying the Tabernacle with blood, the place where God and the people met. This place contracted defilement from the sinful presence of the People, or manipulation of the objects in it by them. God could not enter it nor abide in it till it was purified. This idea is transferred to the true heavenly places, the very destination of which, as the sphere of God's fellowship with the People, cast an impurity upon them, which the true offering of the Son removed (ix. 23). The conception here, of course, is not that the mere physical nature of God reacted against the uncleannesses of men, and refused their presence; on the contrary, the refusal is moral. He is conscious of the condition of the People; their uncleannesses are sins, dead works, even transgressions (ix. 15), and on purification they are remitted (ix. 22, x. 18), He is gracious to their iniquities, and remembers their sins no more (viii. 12, x. 17). The objectivity of the obstacle to fellowship raised by the sins of the People, apart altogether from their own consciences of sins, is more clearly reflected in some at least of the other expressions used in the Epistle, as when it is said that Christ died death for every one (ii. 9; comp. ii. 14), that He made propitiation for the sins of the People (ii. 17), that His death took place for the redemption of transgressions (ix. 15), and that He bore the sins of many (ix. 28). Such terms as "gracious," "transgressions," and "bore," suggest the idea of the divine wrath, and the language touches upon, if it do not express, the more familiar Pauline conception. It can be readily seen, however, how the idea that the whole transaction took place *within* the covenant prevented such a conception from coming to full expression; and in this way is explained the absence from the Epistle of such terms as wrath, curse, reconciliation, and the like. In St. Paul every sin is deadly and infers the curse, and the conception of redemption is shaped by this idea. In this Epistle such sins as draw down the curse are incapable of atone-

ment, and involve cutting off (comp. vi. 7, etc., x. 26). See the mild language in viii. 9, and on the other hand the severe words in x. 26, 27, in reference to those whose sins throw them outside the covenant.

In another view the obstacle to fellowship is an internal one, lying in the conscience. The consciousness of sins hindered the worshipper from drawing near in confidence unto God. Through the offering of Christ the conscience is purified (ix. 14), the worshipper has confidence to enter into the holiest (x. 19), he feels the throne of God to be a throne of grace (iv. 16), though this passage rather belongs to the former side. This purification is an act done once for all (x. 2, 22); an idea expressed also in the phrase, "put away sin by His sacrifice" (ix. 26; comp. x. 4, 11 with ix. 12).

The term purify does not refer to moral purity, but to the sense of conscience of sin (see on ix. 9), *i.e.* to guilt. After cleansing through sacrifice there is no more conscience of sins (see on x. 2). This agrees with the Old Testament usage. The heart is sprinkled so as to have no more an evil conscience (x. 22). This is the meaning of the words, Create in me a clean heart, Ps. li. 10—a clean heart is a pure conscience, the result of forgiveness. The Psalm contains only this one idea; it is throughout a prayer for forgiveness.

2. **Sanctify.**—In English the primary word is *holy*, and we can say, to be holy, but for "to make holy" we say "sanctify," "hallow," "consecrate," or "dedicate." We say, a holy place or a "sanctuary," and for "one who is holy" we say "a saint." The word purify describes an operation which has for its end the service of God or belonging to Him, it does not contain the idea that this end has been reached. Sanctify on the other hand brings into prominence the idea of the relation to God. "Holy" is that which belongs to God (iii. 1, vi. 10, xiii. 24); to sanctify is to make to belong to God. Comp. for Old Testament usage Ex. xiii. 2, 12 with Num. iii. 12, 13 and viii. 16, 17; Deut. xv. 19; also, Ex. xix. 5, 6 with Deut. vii. 6; and the history of Korah, Num. xvi. 1–10. To sanctify is to dedicate to God; the nearer idea of the kind of relation to God will be suggested by that which is dedicated. To sanctify a People to God will mean to consecrate them to Him as a worshipping People—a kingdom of priests. What is implied in this will depend on the conception had of worship, which may vary, and will correspond to the conception had of God, who is to be worshipped; comp. the words of Christ, John iv. 23 with Rom. xii. 1, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. Strictly, however, the term sanctify means merely to place the People in the relation of worshippers to God. These passages indicate the usage in the Epistle:—Chap. xiii. 12, Jesus that He might sanctify the People through His blood . . . Chap. x. 10, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all. Chap. x. 29, the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified. Chap. ix. 13, if the blood of bulls sanctifieth in the matter of the purity of the flesh. These passages indicate—(1) That, though not exclusively, "sanctify" is spoken of when the idea of the People or the covenant is prominent. (2) That the means of sanctification as of purification is blood or

sacrifice. (3) That sanctification like purification is an act done once for all. (4) And that the People of the new covenant have been truly sanctified to God through the offering of Christ. These facts point to some differences between the usage of the word in the Epistle and that now common.

(1) The term, like "purify," does not refer to moral condition of mind; it does not mean to change from a state of moral defilement to purity, but, just as "purify," bears upon the conscience or the sense of guilt. It does not imply destruction of the principle of sin in the heart. The word, though well fitted to bear this deeper sense in relation to true worship, does not seem in fact so used in the Epistle.

(2) Being accomplished "once for all," to sanctify is not a progressive work. It describes the bringing of the People into the relation to God of a worshipping People. The kind of service they render is described in xiii. 15, 16; they render it "continually," for they have joyful confidence to enter the holiest through the blood of Christ (x. 19). Some passages in the Epistle might be supposed to suggest the idea of progressiveness in sanctification, as chap. xii. 14, "follow after that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." But the context indicates that this is an exhortation to preserve the condition of consecration actually realized, and to seek to prevent all that would infringe it. The idea, however, of a fuller entrance into that relation to God, expressed by "holy," seems certainly suggested by chap. xii. 10, where the aim of the divine chastisements is said to be that we might be partakers of His holiness (see on ii. 10).

3. **To perfect.**—To make perfect does not mean to endow with all excellent qualities, but to bring to the *end*, that is, the appropriate end or that which corresponds to the idea. Hence it is a relative term, and may be used of bringing to completion within a variety of spheres. There is no fluctuation in the mere meaning of the word, which is, to bring to the appropriate or appointed end; the variety of meaning arises from the fact that ideal finality will vary according to the sphere in regard to which it is spoken of. Perfection is used of the maturity of manhood, an idea transferred to the maturity of Christian intelligence, chap. v. 14, vi. 1.

The expression is used in regard both to the Son and to men. In regard to the Son it is said that it befitted God to make perfect the Author of salvation through sufferings (ii. 10); that the Son learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and when He was made perfect He became the cause of salvation to them that obey Him (v. 9); and that the Law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity, but the word of the oath appointeth a Son made perfect for evermore (vii. 28). In all these passages the reference is to the Son's present place in the world of salvation. He who is made perfect is the *author of salvation*. What this perfection is is suggested by what salvation is (ii. 6–9), and by what those are who are saved (ii. 10, 11, 14, 15). Perfection is the end of a process carried on *on* the Son—He was crowned with glory because of His suffering death (ii. 9)—the various steps of which, however, reflected themselves in a process going on

*in* Him—He was made perfect through sufferings, He became a merciful High Priest (ii. 17), He learned obedience (v. 8). The point of view of the Epistle, therefore, is not that this making perfect was a process that went on in the Son as a mere moral individual, as if it were an advance in virtue or even a confirmation of a state of sinlessness; it was a process that went on in Him in *His relations* to those whom He was saving. It is a mistake to bring the process of making perfect into special relation to His sufferings viewed as temptations, and to regard it as a moral advance in overcoming them, ending in His exaltation to a condition of confirmed virtue no more assailable, and of beatification above the conditions of temptation. His life under sufferings is not specially regarded as a personal probation. His sufferings were those incident to His vocation as Author of salvation, and as He met them in the actual exercise of it, they were the means of giving Him that experience of human conditions, whether in regard to life (ii. 18), or in relation to God (v. 9), which made Him perfect as the Author of salvation. His learning obedience does not mean that He advanced in the disposition, but that He ever entered more fully into the actual practice and into the experience of what obedience was, till His obedience was crowned in His suffering of death. Neither does the phrase "perfecter of faith" imply that He advanced in strength of faith,—He carried faith through to the end; it had in Him its perfect work. On vii. 28 see notes. In fact, the contrast in the Author's mind is not between an imperfection of the Son in the days of His flesh and a perfection now,—implying a process on personal, moral lines; it is rather one between an imperfection as Author of salvation and Sanctifier of men, due to His pre-existing heavenly condition, and a perfection which His very humiliation enabled Him to acquire, and which He acquired as He successively seized the occasions which His vocation as Author of salvation presented to Him—a process moving on the lines of His relations to mortal, sinful men.

When the word is used in regard to men it is said: that perfection was not by the Levitical priesthood (vii. 11); that the Law made nothing perfect (vii. 18); that the Old Testament offerings were unable to make perfect as to the conscience (ix. 9); that the Old Testament sacrifices offered year by year could not make the worshippers perfect (x. 2); and that the Son by His one offering has for ever perfected the sanctified (x. 14, see notes). "To perfect" here has the same sense of bringing to the appointed end within the sphere referred to. It is probable that, as the passages cited show, the perfecting of men refers to their covenant condition. None of the three words, purify, sanctify, and make perfect, appears used proleptically, to describe an act done in principle, the fruits of which progressively manifest themselves. They resemble "justify" in another system of phraseology, and describe actions done once for all, the fruits of which are of present experience. To perfect, therefore, is to put the People into the true covenant relation of worshippers of the Lord, to bring them into His full fellowship. This condition

was not one realized in the life of the Old Testament saints, but is now realized in their history—they were not made perfect apart from us (xi. 40). But the spirits of just men in heaven are made perfect (xii. 23). Yet their perfection is not strictly the perfection of salvation, which they shall receive when the Lord comes again; it is the perfection of sanctification unto God.

Chap. x. 19–xii. 29. **Renewed exhortation, based on the fact that this new covenant relation has been established through the one perfect and final offering of Christ** (chap. ix. 15–x. 18).

**Outline.**—1. Exhortation to the Hebrews to maintain and use the privileges of the new covenant, vers. 19–25.—(1) To draw near in worship and service (ix. 14) to God with an upright heart and fulness of faith, seeing they have confidence to enter into the holiest through the blood of Christ, and have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, vers. 19–22. (2) More generally, to hold fast the confession of their hope, relying on God's faithfulness to His promises, ver. 23. (3) And to extend their concern in this direction mutually to each other, and encourage one another to love and good works, preserving thus the spirit and enthusiasm as well as the unity of the house of God—and this the more as they see the day of the Lord drawing near, that on that day they may be found faithful, vers. 24, 25.

2. This last thought naturally suggests the other side of the picture. If these duties be neglected and the issue be a falling away from the faith of Christ and they be found sinners (*i.e.* apostates), as their sin is heinous, so the vengeance of God will be terrible, vers. 26–31.

3. But the Apostle hastens away from such a thought, and seeks again to infuse vigour and constancy into their minds under their trials, by reminding them of their own former worthy history in like afflictions, which he desires them now to emulate; and he is confident that their faith will carry them through, vers. 32–39.

4. This mention of faith (which was designed in order to serve as an introduction to what follows) leads him to unfold before their eyes the long and famous roll of Old Testament worthies, who lived and endured, and died in faith, and had from God the testimony that they were pleasing to Him, chap. xi.

5. Coming back from this survey of the glories of faith in the past, the Apostle, with all the force and encouragement which the survey lends, renews his appeal to the Hebrews to run with patient endurance the Christian race, bidding them look unto Him who was the type of faith amidst sufferings, and patiently endured even amidst cross and shame, xii. 1–3.

6. And in order to add force to his appeal, he seeks to turn awa their minds from their sufferings in themselves to what is the tru view of their afflictions. They are not the cruel freaks of chance c of a world where God is not, nor signs that their faith is vain. The testify of God, and are tokens of the truth of their religion. The are the good discipline of a father, earnest of his fatherly solicitud for them, and proofs that they are indeed his true sons. And les the fruits of them, which are righteousness and peace, should be lost or lest, misunderstood, they should lead to evil, he exhorts them t mutual encouragement, and to pursue such a clear course of life tha those who are vacillating may be confirmed, vers. 4–13.

7. This widens out into an exhortation to seek peace with all, bring about that right mind and fit conduct of each member in h own sphere which is a condition of full peace; and, as coverin everything individual, to preserve that consecration of them all God, without which they shall fail at the last to see His face. Th effort after peace and holiness will be on its other side a caref watchfulness that no poisonous root spring up among them and defi the whole community, and that there be no profane-minded pers who, pursuing sensual pleasures now, shall at the last find hims excluded from the blessings of the covenant, vers. 14–17.

8. And the whole passage concludes with a graphic contra between the two economies or revelations of God—the former, sensibl earthly, and yet terrible; the latter, super-sensible, heavenly, a final—a picture into which the Apostle gathers all that is fitted impress the Hebrews and persuade them to hold fast their confiden unto the end, vers. 18–29.

Then follows chap. xiii., containing exhortations to various duti Christian salutations, and personal references.

Vers. 19–25. **Exhortation to the Hebrews to use the privileges r theirs through this one offering of the Son, which has put away sin, opened up for them the way to the throne of grace.**

The exhortation has three parts: (1) One referring more to th private life, to use the open way into the holiest, seeing they hav glad confidence in respect of entrance through the blood of Chr vers. 19, 20. (2) This widens into a more general exhortation regard to the whole attitude of their Christian mind, in the face opposing circumstances and men (comp. xii. 3), and in view of future, to hold fast the confession of their hope, relying on the fa fulness of God to His promises, ver. 23. (3) And taking a wider sw still, it becomes an exhortation to extend their concern in this di tion not only to themselves but to one another, and mutually encourage each other to love and good works, preserving thus

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest
20 by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his

spirit and enthusiasm as well as the unity or peace of the house of God—and this the more as they see the day of the Lord drawing near, that on that day they may all be found faithful, vers. 24, 25.

Vers. 19–22. The exhortation as it bears immediately on their personal life.

1. There are two grounds on which the exhortation is based: first, the boldness or glad confidence which they have by the blood of Jesus to enter the holiest (ver. 19); and, second, that they have a great High Priest over the house of God (ver. 21). 2. The exhortation itself is to draw near unto God (iv. 16) with a double characteristic of mind—a true, that is sincere, heart in respect to God, and a full believing assurance (ver. 22). 3. And two conditions of drawing near they are reminded that they possess, though the reminder is a strong exhortation to see that they possess them—hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (ix. 14), and bodies washed with pure water (ver. 22).

Ver. 19. *Having therefore boldness; therefore* reposes on the finality of the Son's offering for sin (chap. x. 1–18), which purges the conscience *to serve* the living God (ix. 14). Uniting himself with his readers, whom he calls "brethren" (iii. 1, xiii. 22), the Author proceeds, *let us*, vers. 22, 23, 24.—On "boldness," see iii. 6.—*By the blood of Jesus.* This belongs to the whole preceding clause, "joyous confidence to enter." Christians do not enter the holiest *with* the blood of Jesus, for then they would be priests, anew opening up the way, whenever they approached, by a new offering; the view of the passage is that the way is opened up once for all by the offering of the Son (ix. 12, 28, x. 12), and lies for ever open because He abides before the face of God for us (ix. 24); and it is on this fact, called here the blood of Jesus, that the glad confidence of believers in regard to entrance is based.

Ver. 20. *By a new . . . consecrated;* or, **the new way . . . dedicated.** This sufficiently expresses the meaning, though the words may be construed in various ways. The entrance is into the holiest, *i.e.* the place of God's very throne (iv. 16); it is by the way dedicated, or inaugurated, in other words opened up and first trod by Jesus, the forerunner (vi. 19, 20). This way is *new*, *i.e.* fresh and recent; and *living*, *i.e.* probably, having energy and power and effective, as the way into the sanctuary of old was not. Further, this way is *through the veil*, where "through" is local; and this veil is His flesh. The words, through the veil, go with the preceding clause, *which He dedicated*, and the meaning is primarily that for Him the way led through the veil, that is, His flesh. This beautiful allegorizing of the veil cannot, of course, be made part of a consistent and complete typology. It is not meant for this. But as the veil stood locally before the holiest in the Mosaic Tabernacle, the way into which lay through it, so

21 flesh; and *having* an high priest over the house of God;
22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our

Christ's life in the flesh stood between Him and His entrance before God, and His flesh had to be rent ere He could enter. This is the fact and the history which suggest the figure. But under this fact lie principles in the mind of God, and in the public law of the universe, and in the heart and mind of man, the object to be awakened and touched, which give to *through* a deeper sense, and in this sense for us also the way lies through His flesh.

Ver. 21. *And* having *an high priest;* lit. **a great priest**, *i.e.* a great high priest (iv. 14). He is a great High Priest, because Jesus the Son of God, exalted to be over the house of God (iii. 3, 6). The house of God is heaven, considered as the sanctuary, God's dwelling-place; yet not this as a mere empty locality, but as also the abode of the family or people of God (iii. 1–6), for to it even already believers are come (xii. 22, etc.). The best commentary on this verse is chap. iv. 14–16.

Ver. 22. The exhortation is to draw near, that is, in all the exercises of worship and service (xi. 6), and that we may obtain grace for time of need (iv. 16). Two qualities of mind are desired—a true, *i.e.* an upright or genuine heart; and full assurance of faith, that is, fulness of faith, or faith in its condition of full assurance. The "heart" of the soul is like the heart of the body, the centre and determining point in its life, out of which are the issues of life. To it belong those thoughts and intents which bear upon them the stamp of what a man really is, and which the word of God is quick to discern (iv. 12). Towards this deepest part of man's being that hardening gradually creeps and seizes it, which results in an irremediable antagonism to the truth (iii. 8, 12, 15, iv. 7). On the other hand, it is on this centre and mainspring of the life that God writes His law (viii. 10, x. 16); and it is this centre of the life that is established by grace (xiii. 9). The state of the man as he is in this true deep of his nature is reflected in his conscience, as evil or purified (iii. 12, ix. 14, x. 22). And it is with a true heart, a fundamental genuineness, that we must draw near unto God.

The two conditions which the Apostle reminds his readers that they possess are—hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, that is, a sense of sin removed by the offering of Christ (ix. 9, x. 2 with ix. 14); and bodies washed with pure water. The heart and the body comprehend the whole man, inner and outer. The point lies in the purity of the water, making the body an organ of the inner life equally pure with the life itself. The Author may have had before his mind such passages as Ex. xxix. 21, Lev. viii. 30, according to which priests were sprinkled with blood when dedicated to their office, and Ex. xxix. 4, xxx. 20, xl. 30, where they are said to have been washed with water, and where they are commanded to wash in the laver before entering the sanctuary. To the one corresponds the blood of

23 bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering (for he *is* faithful that pro-
24 mised); and let us consider one another to provoke unto love

Christ, and to the other possibly the water of baptism. The rhetorical balance of parts must not be made a doctrinal distinction of effects. Two hindrances to service presented themselves. The sinfulness of the heart concentrated itself in the conscience and hindered all free service; an evil conscience and a true heart are the opposites of one another. This hindrance was removed by the sprinkling. Defilements adhering to the body, or defilements considered under that aspect, were removed by washing. The language is borrowed from the external operations, and baptism, if it be alluded to, is brought into connexion with the body because it was in fact applied to it. The words picture one wholly purified for service, both without and within.

It is doubtful how far the references to the priests are intended to set forth Christians under the aspect of priests. On the one hand the priests, as offerers of sacrifice, have along with their sacrifices been gathered up into the priesthood and offering of the Son, and no place is now found either for priest or sacrifice. The same is true of their function as representatives of the people. On the other hand, the freedom of entering the sanctuary and the holiest was a prerogative that might be held to belong to the priests as distinct from the people. Into this prerogative, however, all Christians have now entered; they have confidence to enter even the holiest, accessible only to the high priest of old (ver. 19). They also share other prerogatives, such as eating of the altar (xiii. 10). In this respect certainly priestly language is used of all believers. Their "drawing near," however, seems regarded as an act merely of worshippers (iv. 16, vii. 25, x. 22, xi. 6), for they do so through the better hope, viz. the priesthood of the Son (vii. 19). They also offer sacrifices. These are of two kinds—a sacrifice of praise, or, in general, the "fruit of the lips" (xiii. 15); and active service, or "doing good and communicating" (xiii. 16). But again these sacrifices, which are well-pleasing unto God, are offered "through" the Son (ver. 15), and thus here also these offerers are properly worshippers drawing near with their gifts through a high priest as of old. The idea of the priesthood of believers could not but fall into the background in the Epistle on account of the great prominence given to the continued high-priesthood of the Son.

Ver. 23. Exhortation as to the general attitude of the Christian mind. *The profession of our faith;* rather, **confession of our hope.** *Without wavering* describes the confession,—that it waver not. Confession of our hope is not confession that we have a hope, but confession of which the things hoped for form the substance. On the faithfulness of God, which here supports the exhortation, comp. vi. 17, etc., xi. 11, xiii. 5.

Vers. 24, 25. The exhortation to mutual encouragement in this direction. *Let us consider* . . . seems to mean, let us regard one another,

25 and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves
together, as the manner of some *is;* but exhorting *one*
*another:* and so much the more, as ye see the day approach-
26 ing. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the
knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for

taking into account each other's circumstances, temptations, weaknesses, and the like, so as to support one another;—scarcely, to regard others and draw encouragement to ourselves from consideration of their manner of life.—*To provoke* . . . usually employed in a bad sense, here to stimulate. *Love* is that to one another; and *good works*, probably also mainly to one another (vi. 10, x. 33, xiii. 16), though perhaps with a more general reference.

Ver. 25. *Not forsaking* . . . contrast to provoking to love. The *assembling together* refers to the meeting of Christians with one another for prayer and mutual edification. It is probable that in the sluggishness (vi. 12) which was threatening to creep over the Hebrews, these assemblies had begun to be neglected. This is implied in the words, "as the manner of some is." The Apostle exhorts to use such meetings as occasions for mutual provoking to love and good works, and it may be for exhibiting an unwavering confession of hope, as well as for helping toward this (comp. iii. 13).—*See the day approaching.* The day is the day of the Lord, the coming again of the Son, and the judgment. What the signs of this day were, which they could "see," must be uncertain. If the Epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, these signs might be the wars and rumours of wars (Matt. xxiv. 6) then rife (comp. x. 37).

Vers. 26–31. **The thought of the day of the Lord leads to a warning against unbelief and falling away.**

*For* . . . *sin wilfully* . . . On that day the consequences of forsaking the Christian assemblies and such coldness as leads to apostasy will be manifest. *Sin wilfully* does not describe an act of sin, but a state—if we are (found) wilful sinners, *i.e.* apostates from the faith of Christ.—*After that* . . . *knowledge* . . . The words imply true reception of the truth. This is everywhere the supposition which the Apostle makes. He speaks as a practical teacher; the abstract question, whether a true believer could fall away, was not before his mind. Unquestionably those to whom he wrote, if they did not hold fast the confession of their faith, would not be saved; and if they did not use the right means to constancy (vers. 24, 25), they would cease to hold fast their confession; and it is to them as persons whose minds may be influenced by considerations which he lays before them, and whose faith and unbelief are (so far as the Writer's view at present extends) in their own hands, that he writes.—*No more sacrifice;* or **there is left** (iv. 6, 9) **no more a sacrifice.** For those who sin wilfully, that is, against light and experience, after being truly enlightened, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin; the one sacrifice which is for sins has been rejected after its sanctifying effects were experi-

27 sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery
28 indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that
despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three
29 witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall
he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son
of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where-
with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done

enced. The Apostle's statement is not merely an economical one, that there is no other dispensation of grace to follow the Christian, through which such a sin could be atoned. If he means this at all, he at least means more. For this sin as *he conceives it* there is no forgiveness, and that not from the mere nature of the case, there being no other means of atonement to remove it, but on account of its aggravation. It is parallel to the sin of Israel in the wilderness, or the sin of idolatry in the Old Testament; it throws those guilty of it outside the covenant relation within which God is gracious, and involves cutting off from the people.

Ver. 27. *But a certain fearful* . . . There is left no sacrifice, there is left a fearful awaiting of judgment, another "waiting" from that in ix. 28. The word *certain* (*i.e.* a sort of, or, what may indeed be called a, fearful) gives a vagueness to fearful and heightens its meaning.—*Fiery indignation*, lit. *zeal* (fury) *of fire*. The judgment of God is often compared to a fire (Mic. i. 3; Zeph. i. 18; comp. Heb. xii. 29).

Vers. 28–30. The doom decreed against those who set at nought the Law of Moses was inexorable and awful—without mercy; how much severer must the punishment be of those who despise the new covenant! On the case adduced see Deut. xvii. 2–7 (comp. Deut. xix. 15, xviii. 20; Lev. xxiv. 11, etc.).

Ver. 29. The sin of apostasy from the new covenant is drawn in all its aggravation and meaning. It is—(1) To tread under foot, that is, reject with public contumely (vi. 6) the Son of God, who revealed the covenant and is its High Priest, and hath indeed been manifested (ix. 26). (2) It is to count the blood of the covenant (ix. 15–20), which belonged to the things "most holy" (Lev. vi. 29, etc.), *unholy*, that is, either "common," ordinary blood, or even unclean, the blood of a malefactor; and to do this after experiencing its sanctifying influence (ix. 14, x. 10, xiii. 12). (3) It is to do despite unto the Spirit of grace, the Holy Spirit. The "Spirit of grace" may be the Spirit who imparts grace, or who is the gift of grace. With the exception of ii. 9, grace is spoken of in the Epistle not as the principle in God from which the mission of the Son originates, but as the result of His death. Because He is our High Priest at God's right hand, the throne of God is a throne of grace (iv. 16). They who fall from the faith of Christ turn away from the grace of God (xii. 15). By grace, not meats, the heart is established (xiii. 9). Hence the Epistle closes with a prayer that grace be with all (xiii. 25). Grace is a state of God's

30 despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that
hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense,
saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.
31 *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye
were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;
33 partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches
and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of

mind, as in the Old Testament, though this naturally is apt to be confused with the favours flowing from it. It seems probable, therefore, that the Spirit is the gift of grace rather than the imparter of it, which He could be strictly only as assuring men of it (Rom. v. 5). The reference in the words is probably to the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost (ii. 4, vi. 4, 5); and to do despite to or insult this Holy Spirit, is, like the Jews in the days of our Lord (Matt. xii. 24, etc.), to regard these signs as the works of an evil and lying spirit, by which the people was deceived.

Vers. 30, 31. The certainty of this sorer punishment (ver. 29) is sustained by a reference to the retributive righteousness of God.—*For we know him . . .*, *i.e.* we know who it is that hath said . . . it is the living God—this, rather than, we know what the character of Him is who hath said. That He hath said it, implies the certainty and the awful nature of the vengeance.—The words are from Deut. xxxii. 35, not quite as in the Septuagint, but as in Rom. xii. 19. The Author may have been familiar with the Epistle to the Romans, or both St. Paul and he may have used a current form of the words. The phrase, "saith the Lord," occurring in Romans, should perhaps be omitted here.—*The Lord will judge* (Deut. xxxii. 36). In the original sense the words mean, will do judgment *for* His People; here they are used in a more general sense, embracing at least also judgment *upon* them. In the Old Testament salvation is usually through judgment (Isa. iv. 4). Ver. 31 is suggested by the thought of God's judgment—the judgment of the living God (see on iii. 12), who judges and executes at once.

Vers. 32–39. But the Apostle hastens to turn away from this awful picture, and will rather encourage his readers by recalling their former stedfastness under trials like the present, which he is confident they will continue to show.

Ver. 32. *Call to remembrance*, *i.e.* keep in your memory. The former days were the early days of their faith when it was strong. On enlightened, see vi. 4.—*Fight of afflictions*, lit. contest (or struggle, root of *athlete*) of sufferings. The sufferings are not considered the antagonist, the words describe in what the struggle consisted—in sufferings.

Ver. 33. In two ways the Hebrews, just after their conversion, had endured such sufferings—partly in being themselves subjected publicly to reproaches and sufferings, and partly in becoming voluntary

34 them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in
my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods,
knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an
35 enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence,
36 which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need
of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye
37 might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he
38 that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just

sympathizers and sharers with them who were so used, or whose Christian life was led under such troubles.

Ver. 34. Instances of this general statement, the two elements of it being given in the reverse order: they had compassion on or sympathized with (iv. 15) those in bonds; and they accepted with joy the spoiling of their own possessions.—*Compassion of me . . . bonds;* rather, **of those in bonds**; so probably the true reading, though the other reading in various shapes is ancient.—*Knowing in yourselves that ye have;* rather, **knowing that ye yourselves have . . .**; or, **that ye have yourselves as a better . . .** The first of these two seems to say little, and the emphasis on "yourselves" is hardly accounted for by it. The other is peculiar, though comp. ver. 39 (Luke ix. 25, xxi. 19). There is also a reading "for yourselves," which, if certainly sustained by adequate authority, would be easiest.—The words "in heaven" are to be omitted.

Ver. 35. Return to the exhortation, founded now on their own splendid example in the past, and on the thought of the "abiding possession" which sustained them then.—*Cast not away . . . confidence, i.e.* joyful confidence or boldness (x. 19). "Recompense of reward" had been mentioned before on its dark side (ii. 2), here and in xi. 26 (comp. xi. 6, xii. 2) it expresses the bright side of the final issue of things at the coming of the Lord (ix. 28).

Ver. 36. Justification of the exhortation not to "cast away" their confidence; through it only and the patient endurance to which it would lead, and of which in their circumstances they had need, could the promise be obtained.—*Need of patience, i.e.* patient endurance (see on vi. 12). This courageous endurance is the opposite of that faint-hearted flinching and "drawing back" referred to in ver. 38. The words, ye have need of patience, may contain also a delicate suggestion that just here they were lacking (vi. 12).—*After ye have done the will of God;* rather, **that doing the will of God ye may . . .** The will of God is His will that they should hold fast their confidence (comp. xii. 5–13).—On "promise," see on ix. 15.

Ver. 37. I say, "receive the promise," *for* it will speedily be realized.—*A little while;* rather, **a very little while.** The words are taken from Isa. xxvi. 20, and Hab. ii. 3, 4.—*He that shall come;* or, **that cometh**; *i.e.* the Lord. See on i. 1.

Vers. 38, 39. Very speedily will He come. Now the principle of the life of the righteous is faith; a timid shrinking back will lead to

shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul sha
39 have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who dr
back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the
of the soul.

perdition.—*Now the just man;* rather, **now my righteous one**;—"my
referring to God, who everywhere is He who speaks in Scriptu
So "*my* soul" in the end of the verse.—*Shall live by faith;*
seems most naturally to express what is the principle and con
of life unto God, so that the words would mean simply **liveth**, ra
than *shall enter into life.* The word "life" in the sense of the ete
life does not occur in the Epistle. On the other hand, the last w
of ver. 39 are rather in favour of shall enter into life, *i.e.* at the com
of the Son.—*If* any man *draw back;* rather, **if he** (my righteous o
draw back. The idea and word are well illustrated by the condu
of St. Peter at Antioch, Gal. ii. 12 (the word "withdrew himself"
the same). Comp. Jer. xviii. 9, 10; Ezek. xviii. 24, etc.—The passa
is a free form of Hab. ii. 4, according to the Septuagint, the claus
of the verse being transposed. The Septuagint itself departs in or
clause considerably from the Hebrew.

Ver. 39. The Apostle, uniting himself with his readers, is confide
that they are not of that faint-hearted faithless class who draw ba
—*Draw back unto perdition*, lit. **of drawing back unto . . .**,—the
of which drawing back is destruction.—*But of them that believe to
the saving*, lit. **but of faith unto the gaining**,—the end of which fa
is the gaining of the soul.—If the words "shall live" in ver. 38 do n
express the general principle, but refer to the particular moment.
the judgment, as the futures in ver. 38 and the connection make n
improbable, then "shall live" must perhaps be taken in the sense
shall be preserved, and not die (ver. 39), as "life" in the positive, ma
sive sense of the eternal life does not seem to belong to the Epistle.

Chap. xi. Having mentioned faith as the principle of the life
the righteous, the Apostle unfolds before the eyes of his reade
splendid roll of Old Testament worthies, who lived and endure
wrought righteousness by faith, in order to encourage them t
the like example (comp. xii. 1).

This purpose to trace the action of faith as the princip
unto God down through all history was in the Author's mi
the vers. x. 38, 39 skilfully lead over from chap. x. to the execu
of this purpose.

Ver. 1. **Description of Faith.**—The connection is: We are
shrinking back, but of faith unto the gaining of the soul; now
is . . .—*Faith is the substance . . . the evidence.* It is evident
the Apostle means to describe what kind of mental act or sta
is. The words "substance" and "evidence" are not things
mind, and do not express the condition of the mind; they are thi
outside of it. If these words be retained, therefore, as the first

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evi- of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a

ay be, the Author's language is somewhat inexact, and what eans to say is: faith is the giving substance to things hoped it is the act or state of the mind which makes things that are as t objects of hope as substantial as if actually possessed. The occurs in the sense of "substance," i. 3; it occurs, however, in e of "assured confidence" in iii. 14. It may have the latter ere. It is obvious that in effect the two meanings come to ne thing, although the first is a more graphic expression.— rm "evidence" means testing, or bringing to the proof. It is d that the act does not stop with testing, but ends in con- n or persuasion in regard to the things tested. Whether, there- we say faith is the testing of things not seen, or the conviction irm persuasion of them, the sense remains the same, though the first phrase is more graphic and suggests better the high vity of the mind in faith.—These terms, *giving substance to* or *urance*, and *testing of* or *conviction*, describe strictly the essence aith; the second member in each of the two classes defines the *ct* of faith. Both act and object may go to a full account of what is. In the one case the object is things hoped for, in the other hings unseen. In the latter case "things" is expressed, in the r not; but nothing seems to lie in this, for it is certain that in llowing verses many of the unseen objects of faith cannot be acterized as "things," *e.g.* the act of creation by the word of God . 3). It is evident from the fact that the Author gives two state- ts of what faith is, that what we have from him is not a scholastic nition of faith, but an effort to give such a description of it as, ng with the illustrations of it, will uphold his readers in persever- ce. The first account of it as the assurance of things hoped for ches them closely; but though very pertinent, it is not exhaustive, he adds a more general one in the second clause. Things for are necessarily future, but things not seen may be past or present (ver. 27). The object of faith is really the word of its promises create things hoped for, and its affirmations or ns or promises, or in general its contents, bring before the the main things not seen. And the word of God is God g (Note to chap. iv. 13). Faith is the mind's realizing to itself supersensuous in the region of religion, that is, of God and salva- nd the medium through which it is enabled to realize this is rd of God.

r. 2. Faith really does these great things (the doing of which is highest act of man and what is most pleasing to God), for in the ion and exercise of it the elders had (God's) testimony borne n.—*For by it*, lit. for in this, *i.e.* in the possession and exercise this faith.—*Obtained a good report;* rather, were borne witness to God). The elders are the saints of former days of whom the d Testament speaks.

3 good report. Through faith we understand that the wor
were framed by the word of God, so that things which
4 seen were not made of things which do appear. By fa
Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Ca
by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, G

Ver. 3, etc. Being about to follow the Old Testament history in illustrations of faith down from the beginning, the Author lays ev the first two chapters of Genesis under contribution for an illust tion. — *Through faith*, or by, as in all the following statemer vers. 4, 5, 7, etc.—*Understand that worlds . . . word of God.* T fact of creation is a matter of faith. What makes it of faith, ho ever, is not that we receive it on testimony, even that of Scriptu for this is not the idea of faith (ver. 1), but that we realize the wo of God, as an unseen supersensuous power, bringing the worlds i being, or realize them as originating out of this unseen immate cause. Such is the meaning of the second clause of the verse, whi explains the first half.—*So that things which are seen . . . ;* bett what is seen (the visible world). The whole clause runs lit. order that what is seen shall not have arisen out of things that appear. The explanation of the faith-perception is conceived by t Writer as the purpose of it. To our way of thinking it would r stand as purpose but as *effect*, and the sentence run: by faith perceive . . . word of God, to the effect that (or, so that) what seen shall not have (or, hath not) arisen, etc. There is no referer in the words to any purpose or design of God. The effect of the of faith is conceived as its purpose. Before exhibiting how faith the principle that rules the life of men in relation to God, do through all history, as it is transacted on the stage of the world, t Author shows how this stage itself is brought into connection w God by an act of faith.—By faith we *understand* might seem paradox. The word means, perceive by the mind (*nous*), and is us by St. Paul in the same way, Rom. i. 20. If what is seen or t visible world had been perceived or understood as arising out things that appear, other visible matter, there would have been faith; it is the perception of the invisible cause, the word of G producing the visible effect that makes the act of faith.

Ver. 4. Abel. — *A more excellent sacrifice*, lit. a more sacrif (iii. 3). Whether the greater excellence consisted in the dispositi and faith with which it was offered, or in some superiority of mani of offering, or in the material offered, to which the disposition led, not stated. The Author says that it was more excellent, and that greater excellence was due to faith, though whether directly indirectly is left a question.—*By which . . . witness;* or, throu which (*i.e.* his faith) he had witness borne him. — *God testifyi of . . . ;* or, over his gifts, in respect of his gifts. Through faith he had witness borne him by God, and this was done over gifts; how it was done is not stated here nor elsewhere in Scriptu

testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him:* for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved

mp. perhaps Judg. vi. 21). The witness borne carried with it the aning that in God's sight he was *righteous* (comp. Matt. xxiii. 35; John iii. 12).—*And by it . . . speaketh;* or, **and through it** (his th), etc. "Yet" does not mean *still*, even to us, but, **notwithnding** his being dead he speaketh. The reference is to Gen. 10, where the voice of his blood is said to cry. It cried through faith, because even in death God's saints are dear unto Him (Ps. vi. 15). The pres. "speaketh" is used because the words stand rmanently recorded in Scripture, which brings the past into our esence.

Vers. 5, 6. **Enoch.**—*He had this testimony;* lit. **hath had witness me him** (vers. 4, 39). The tenses used again refer to the word of ripture; see the history, Gen. v. 24. When it is said that by faith noch was translated, it is not meant that this was the direct conseence of his faith, as if even when upon the earth his condition of nd was so elevated that it caused his passage to God; nor perhaps t meant that his faith enabled him to be translated, as elsewhere aith to be healed is spoken of. His faith and his translation were nnected, the one was by the other. The point is not touched on how Enoch's faith differed from that of others, so that this great ference in their history ensued.—*He pleased God.* The Heb., noch walked with God, is rendered in the Septuagint, Enoch *ased God*, and this is quoted here.

Ver. 6. This being well pleasing unto God implies faith.—*Cometh to God;* or, **draweth near** (iv. 16, vii. 25, x. 22), *i.e.* with sacrifice in prayer or in godly fellowship.—*That he is, i.e.* exists, though ether more lie in the word or not is doubtful; perhaps, is and is d.—*Is a rewarder;* or, **proves a rewarder.** The reference seems s to hearing and helping in individual instances during life, than he final reward in the world to come. So the connection.—Both the case of Abel and Enoch the Author infers their faith from ir relations to God given in history, and also explains their history m their faith.

Ver. 7. **Noah.**—The statement in regard to Noah is: by faith ah . . . . prepared the ark. That which was the object of his h was the divine warning and its contents: being warned of God things not seen as yet. The unseen things contained in God's rd to him were the flood and destruction of the world, and also own means of safety. And either the condition of mind which is

with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by t
which he condemned the world, and became heir of t
8 righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when
was called to go out into a place which he should after recei
for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowi

faith itself, or a condition closely allied to it, is expressed in t
words: *moved with fear;* rather, **with godly fear** (see on v. 7). T
state of mind the Author would probably regard as an effect of
faith.—*By the which;* or, **through . . .**, that is, his faith. H
faith and the godly fear it led to and the external act are all gather
together under the name and idea of faith.—*Condemned the wor*
that is, either, as is said of the Ninevites, Matt. xii. 41, his faith
in strong contrast the unbelief of the ungodly world of his day, a
showed its blameworthiness; or his preparing of the ark in faith
the judgment which he anticipated, was a proof how evil he deem
the world to be, and a verdict of condemnation upon it.—*Heir of*
*righteousness . . . by faith;* or, **according to faith.** The words
*become heir* are not to be pressed; they mean, in the Epistle, to en
into possession of. Noah is the first person called righteous
Scripture, Gen. vi. 9. The idea that righteousness is an inheritan
into which men successively enter through faith is not in the wor
How far the idea that righteousness is something coming to h
from another lies in the term is difficult to say. The view of t
Epistle seems to be this: Noah had faith, not strictly righteousn
as yet. Righteousness is so through the judgment or estimate of G
Noah's faith was well-pleasing unto God, and His judgment of sat
faction passed upon it constituted it righteousness (Gen. xv. 6).

Vers. 8–19. **Abraham and Sarah with their immediate descendants.**

*When he was called to go out . . .*; rather, **Abraham, when call
obeyed to go out.** The statement is: by faith Abraham obeyed to
out. This was the act of his faith. The object of his faith is
pressed in the words: when called. This call of God was, with
contents and promises, the unseen thing, which his faith realiz
It is to be observed, however, that it is not the *fact* of being cal
that is considered the object of faith. We might be inclined
include under faith this, that Abraham was persuaded that the vo
that called him was God's voice. But this is going farther ba
than the Author goes, either in the case of Abraham or in that
Noah (ver. 7). Not his realizing the fact that God was calling h
was faith, but his realizing the promises accompanying the call, a
set forth in it.—The words, "to a place which he should after receiv
imply that the Author conceives this place to enter into the conte
of the call, as it entered into the obedience (so Gen. xii. 1).—That
went out not knowing whither he went expresses how absolutely
act was one of faith, there was no particle of sight in it. Even s
the life of faith must be entered on in ignorance of the way to
inheritance, or even what the inheritance and rest in each on

9 whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose

articular case will be, and of the experiences that the way will ring. This is true even of ordinary life.

Vers. 9, 10. Further illustration of Abraham's faith.—*He sojourned . . strange country;* or, **a land not his own.** To sojourn is to dwell s a stranger or visitor in a place which is not one's home (ver. 13). braham's dwelling in Canaan, the land of promise, was this kind of welling. He felt that he did not belong to the land nor the land to im. Abode in the land with this feeling that it was not his home is alled here an act of faith.—*Dwelling in tabernacles.* This trait of welling in tents, pitched to-day in one place and to-morrow in another, s a trait thrown in to indicate the temporary, unsettled nature of braham's abode in Canaan, which his immediate descendants, saac and Jacob, equally heirs with him of the promises, shared. he object of this passage is not to draw a distinction between this ind of possession of Canaan which Abraham and his descendants ad, and a true full possession such as Israel ultimately attained to, s if the latter were the object of Abraham's faith. The view is quite ifferent. It is assumed that Abraham had possession of Canaan; ut this possession, a life in tents, now here and now there, is conrasted with another kind of possession, and with possession of nother country, and abode in a fixed city. This other kind of abode, n this other country and city, was the object of Abraham's expectaon. And this faith directed to the invisible city of God made his bode in Canaan a "sojourn" in a land not his own.—*A city which ath foundations;* rather, **the city** (comp. ver. 16, xii. 22) which hath **ie foundations** (xiii. 14).—*Builder and maker*, lit. **architect and uilder** (ver. 16). The city is the new Jerusalem in heaven: see eferences. It will be allowed that Abraham's life in Canaan, dwellng in tents and shifting from spot to spot, with an intermittent anifestation of God to him, now at the oaks of Mamre and now lsewhere, did not satisfy his ideal nor come up to what the promise uggested to him when he left his home in the East. To this unettled life in tents the Epistle opposes a fixed abode in a city with undations, the expression "foundations" bringing out by contrast ith tents its permanence and stability. Perhaps to the occasional ppearances of God is opposed the fact that of this city God is the esigner and builder, and Himself abides within it. It is the city of ie living God (xii. 22). At all events, what Abraham looked for was settled abode in the fellowship of God, in a life and in conditions ie idea of which was sketched by God and the design completed by od. This idea of a settled, social, well-ordered human life, acording to the thought and will of God, and in the fellowship of God, hich Abraham's faith conceived from the promises, and which his ope looked for, had received a definite shape from history ere this

11 builder and maker *is* God. Through faith also Sara herse
received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of
child when she was past age, because she judged him faithf
12 who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, an
him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in mu
titude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innume
13 able. These all died in faith, not having received th
promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuade
of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they we

Epistle was written. The idea had been faintly realized in Jer
salem, the city of God's habitation, compactly built together, whith
the tribes went up; yet very inadequately, and the perfect realizi
of it was transferred to the future and to another condition of th
world. It became the new or heavenly Jerusalem, or the Jerusale
that is above. This was the more definite form which history an
the religious life of men had given the conception when this Epist
was written. But the conception was no other than the idea
Abraham, and the Epistle bestows on his idea this name. How f
Abraham abstracted the realization of his idea from this world
from the conditions of this world in his day may be hard to sa
What is of importance is that his idea was essentially a religious on
and the same with that of men in the days when this Epistle w
written; and whether he looked for the realizing of it in the world
he knew it, or looked for it in a world to come, is a question that h
little meaning; when his hope is realized this world shall be th
world to come.

Ver. 11. **Sarah.** See Gen. xvii. 19, xviii. 11–14, xxi. 2.—*Sar
herself also;* what precise force lies in *herself also* is uncertai
whether, though barren, or, though at first unbelieving — hardl
with Bengel, though nothing but a woman. Some would rende
Sarah also on her part. The expression, "because she judged," et
expands "by faith." — On the idea of the verse comp. perha
Acts xiv. 9.—The words, "and was delivered," etc., are probably
be omitted.

Ver. 12. The "one" is Abraham; comp. Rom. iv. 19; Isa. li.
See Gen. xv. 5, xxii. 17.

Vers. 13–16. *These all died in faith;* or, **according to faith.** T
reference is to Abraham and Sarah and their immediate descendan
not to Noah and those farther back. The statement seems not to
the negative one, that they all died without having received the pr
mises, still only in the region of faith, not in that of enjoyment; b
the positive one, that their death, like their life, was according to fai
the emphasis falling on *died*,—all their life through, even up to deat
was according to faith; in this state of mind as persons not havi
received the promises, but having, etc. (comp. vers. 14, 16), they die
—The clause, "and were persuaded of them," is to be omitted.
*And embraced . . confessed;* or, **and having greeted them . . . a**

strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten *son*, of whom it was

**ving confessed.** On such confessions see Gen. xxiii. 4, xlvii. 9. They v the promises afar off and greeted or saluted them; they hailed m, and confessed that they were sojourners here. The verse does contain an objective statement that they were only still in the dition and region of faith when they died, but gives an internal ture of their mind and how they felt themselves to be, a conscious- ss which they preserved even up to death.

Ver. 14. *Seek a country.* We can hardly translate *native country*, ugh this is the meaning—**a country of their own.** Persons who l themselves strangers and sojourners in that land where they live, ply that they desire a country of their own, one to which they ong and which belongs to them.

Ver. 15. They seek a country of their own, and this could not be land from which they came out, viz. Mesopotamia, for to this y might have returned.

Ver. 16. *But now;* that is, as the case in truth is. The country y desire, and which they show that they desire when they call mselves strangers in the land where they dwell, is a heavenly one. *Wherefore . . . ashamed to be;* or, **ashamed of them to be called.** eing they desire a heavenly country, the abode of God, He is not amed to be called their God (comp. Gen. xxviii. 13; Ex. iii. 6; tt. xxii. 31; Luke xx. 37). The phrase, "to be called their God," erprets, "not ashamed of them." Their desire for fellowship with m He meets with a public avowal of His relation to them.—*For hath prepared . . .*; proof or illustration that He is not ashamed, hat is, that He is their God. He is their God, as is seen in His ving prepared a city for them—His own city. Whether the Writer ans by "prepared," made ready merely in design as yet, or actually stowed upon them, may be uncertain. See xii. 22, etc.

Vers. 17, 18. Abraham's faith in offering Isaac. See Gen. xxii. 1, . The name Isaac conveys much meaning and recalls a history ven deeply on the Patriarch's mind.—*And he that had received;* **yea he that had welcomed.** The phrase suggests the joy with ich the promises were received, and heightens the meaning of the which was now to crush it.—*Offered up*, lit. **was offering.** He is phically represented in the act, showing how far he had gone ough his faith.

Ver. 18. *Of whom*; rather, **he to whom**, *i.e.* Abraham. The terms

19 said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting t
God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; fr
20 whence also he received him in a figure. By faith Is
21 blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By fa
Jacob, when he was a-dying, blessed both the sons of Josep

are accumulated to give deeper colour to the picture,—Isaac, o
begotten, he who had accepted, he to whom it was said, In Isaac
The phrase, In Isaac shall thy seed be called, means, Through Is
shall they come who shall be called (and *be*, in the sense of the p
mise) thy seed. Abraham had other descendants; his seed, in
pregnant sense of the promise, was to be through Isaac.

Ver. 19 interprets and analyzes "by faith" of ver. 17, laying b
to us the mental process and operations which were "faith." Ab
ham realized the omnipotence of God, and trusted to it, believ
that it could raise even from the dead. The original promise
firmly believed in also, and looked to the realizing of it through Go
power. This was a complicated and brilliant act of faith. C
fusion might have been introduced into his mind through w
seemed contradictory leading on the part of God. But his faith
able to realize the reconciliation. Faith in God's first promise
faith in God as power, made faith in the new command and obedie
to it possible. It may perhaps be possible in every case to comb
the fragments of our religious experience into a unity, though
experiences are so various at various times, that they are less like
continuous line of a single life than sections cut out of various li
and placed together like oil and water. That which will give th
unity will be a higher thought of God.—*From which . . . figu*
lit. in a parable or similitude. Abraham received his son back fr
death in a similitude. To Abraham's mind and to the boy's mind
was as good as dead—his restoration was virtually a resurrection.

Ver. 20. **Isaac.** Gen. xxvii. 27, etc., 39, etc.—The blessing of Is
referred to things to come, things the coming of which he had he
from God, and was an illustration of faith.

Ver. 21. **Jacob.** Gen. xlviii. 1, etc.—Jacob in blessing had resp
to the future as contained in the promise, which he realized, as
preference of the one son before the other showed, forecasting th
separate destinies and different degrees of eminence in the kingd
of God.—*And worshipped . . . staff*, Gen. xlvii. 31. This was o
different occasion, and also illustrative of his faith; for he char
Joseph to carry him up out of Egypt and bury him in the land t
was to belong to the People of God, that he might share it. T
worship indicated his faith in God and thankfulness to Him and tr
in Him to verify that which He had caused men to hope. The Aut
follows the Sept. in reading, *on the top of his staff*; the Heb. has,
*the head of his bed*.[1] The one reading represents the aged Patria

[1] The word as read in Heb. is *mittah*, as read by the Sept. it is *matteh*.
Sept. translators had no vowels in their text.

22 and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff. By faith
Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the
children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his
23 bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three
months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper
child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.
24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be
25 called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to
suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the

as leaning on his staff for weakness, and bowing low over it out of reverence to God; the other as, after charging Joseph (to do which he perhaps sat up), prostrating himself towards the head of his bed before God.

Ver. 22. **Joseph.** Gen. l. 24, etc.—Joseph's mind was also directed to the future and invisible, and the trustful state of his mind was shown by his mentioning the departure of Israel from Egypt; and in full faith that it would come about according to the promise, he gave commandment concerning his bones. Comp. Josh. xxiv. 32.

Ver. 23. **The parents of Moses.** Ex. ii. 2.—The Old Testament attributes the hiding to the mother; here it is attributed to the parents.—*Proper*, lit. **beautiful**, Heb. good. The hiding of the child was an act of faith; it is probable that the Author means that the parents from the appearance of the child,—for beauty was a special gift of God, and pointed inwards,—conceived that God had some high designs in regard to him, and connected him with God's purposes as to the destinies of the nation.—*Were not afraid . . . commandment.* On the commandment, see Ex. i. 16–22. Their faith in the child's destinies in connection with the promises of God to His people, led them to preserve his life by hiding him, and to disregard the king's order.

Vers. 24–28. **Moses.**—*Refused . . . daughter;* rather, **son of a daughter of Pharaoh's.** Ver. 25 explains how he refused; instead of attaching himself to the household of the king and the side of the Egyptians, he took the part of his brethren (Ex. ii. 11, 12).

Ver. 25. Moral meaning of his refusal (ver. 24). This refusal was an act of faith, as having this meaning. He realized the significance of the conditions and the parties before him—the People of God on the one hand, with their destinies stretching into the endless future, and sin with its temporary pleasures on the other, in the court and life of Egypt. In whatever age or country or condition between these two lies the moral cleavage, and Moses perceived it. The "great renunciation" which he made differed from his whom the poet condemns.[1] In no case is the kind of decision which Moses had to make simple. The true meaning of the elements of life is obscured by their circumstances. The People of God in that day was an abject and servile race, while sin was invested with all the

1 "Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto."—*Inferno*, iii.

26 pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach c
Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he hac

splendours of a court. To join the one was to suffer their afflictior and share their degradation; while the other offered pleasures, not c a base kind, which never could have attractions for Moses, but of kind that has fascinations for all men of high capacity, for Egypt wa then an empire that played a high part on the stage of the worl (Acts vii. 22). The faith of Moses enabled him to estimate aright the objects before him, and to forecast the future of the People c God, and oppose it to the temporary glory of sin. "Sin" in his cas would have been apostasy, and there lies a delicate appeal to th Hebrews in his example.

Ver. 26. Further analysis of his faith and explanation of "choosin rather," etc. (ver. 25).—*The reproach of Christ* . . . This expressio occurs again, xiii. 13. Two elements lie in the phrase there: it is th same reproach as Christ bore, and it is borne by others in the feelin of this and with Him in their mind. This sense is also that of xii. 2, The reproach which Moses suffered in the fellowship of the People c God—the hardship, contempt, and the like, inflicted at the hands c the Egyptian world then—was the same as that inflicted on Christ i the days of His flesh, and the same as was borne by the Hebrev believers in their day, or as is borne by believers at all times. Thougl the reproach and the sufferings are the same, however, Christ i worthy to give name to them; to others they derive their meanin from having been endured by Him, and in Him they reached thei climax. The wave of suffering and reproach that rose far back, ever at the other side of the sea of time, and rolled ever in towards th shore, went, as it rose, over the People of God in Egypt; it broke i its height over Christ Himself; and believers since then are stil struggling in its broken waters.—Yet all this scarcely does justice t the passage, especially when the words, "respect unto the recompens of the reward," are considered. By this the Author means th Messianic salvation when fully manifested (x. 35). The passage is delineation of the "faith" of Moses, his consciousness directed to th future; ver. 25 exhibits this in one light, and ver. 26 in another an higher view. The reproach of Christ is therefore not merely reproach, which the Author feels himself entitled to call the reproac of Christ. He might feel so entitled on account of the sameness c the two; or in quite a different sense: on account of the oneness c Christ with the members of the church, Christ might be said to feel a His own the reproach suffered by them. This mystical union, however cannot be shown to be an idea belonging to the Epistle, nor is thi sense pertinent to the connection. Or Christ might be supposed i some mystical sense, as the Logos, or as the Christ, to be present a all times in the church, and to be really, under whatever form, tha element in it against which the reproach of the world was directed Such an idea is probably quite foreign to the Epistle. All thes explanations go no farther than to show how the Author might hav

27 respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he
forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he
28 endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he
kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that
29 destroyed the first-born should touch them. By faith they passed
through the Red sea as by dry *land:* which the Egyptians
30 assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho
31 fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By
faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed

called the reproach suffered by Moses the reproach of Christ. But the passage seems to say more, viz. not only that the reproach was the same as that of Christ, but that Moses suffered it having Him in his view. How precise his knowledge is considered by the Author to have been, cannot be decided with certainty; at least, his mind, filled with the promises, was directed to the future, that future which has now become historically realized. On the terms used, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 50, 51.

Ver. 27. *Forsook Egypt.* This seems most naturally to refer not to his leading of the people out of Egypt (comp. mention of the Passover in next verse), but to his own temporary retreat to Midian (Ex. ii. 15). In Ex. ii. 14 it is said that Moses was afraid because his murder of the Egyptian was known. Here he is said not to have feared the wrath of the king. The two statements are not irreconcilable. So far as his life was concerned he feared, but in a higher region he had no fear; he took steps to save his life in faith of a time when God in accordance with His promises would interpose to redeem His people, just as in this faith he had already acted in opposition to the king.—*For he endured . . .* His faith made him strong and fearless; he saw Him who is invisible, and took his flight with a high courage and certainty.

Ver. 28. The keeping of the Passover and observing the command to sprinkle the blood on the door-posts was an act of faith; he believed the threat concerning the destroyer, and trusted in God's grace to Israel (Ex. xii. 7, 22, etc.).

Ver. 29. **Passage of the sea.** The people's faith in the power of God and trust in their relation to Him, led them to obey His command and commit themselves to the sea (Ex. xiv. 22; comp. Matt. iv. 25–33).

Ver. 30. **The fall of Jericho.** Josh. vi.—Here the faith of the whole people is again illustrated. They believed in the might of Jehovah, in His power to throw down the city without engines of war or other means, and in obedience to His word they went about its walls seven days. Comp. Matt. xvii. 20.

Ver. 31. **Rahab.** Josh. ii. 6, 17.—The term *harlot* is probably to be taken in its natural sense.—*That believed not;* or, **obeyed not**—the inhabitants of Jericho, who, though the acts of God in behalf of Israel were not unknown to them (Josh. ii. 10), refused to submit to Him.

32 not, when she had received the spies with peace. And what
shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon
and *of* Barak, and *of* Samson, and *of* Jephthae; *of* David
33 also, and Samuel, and *of* the prophets: who through faith
subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained pro-
34 mises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of
fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were
made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the
35 armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to
life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliver-
36 ance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and

Rahab realized the power of the Lord, believing Him to be the God of the whole earth, who had given the land to His people (Josh. ii. 9). In this faith she protected the spies and was herself saved.

Ver. 32, etc. The writer, unable to trace the history of individuals further in detail, groups a number together and refers to the many great deeds which faith enabled them to perform. On Gideon Judg. vi.–viii.; Barak, Judg. iv., v.; Samson, Judg. xiii.–xvi. Jephthah, Judg. xi., xii., etc.

Ver. 33. *Subdued kingdoms* may refer to the deeds of the Judges just named, or especially to those of David. In their wars that which gave them power was their faith in Jehovah.—*Wrought righteousness* may refer either to internal administration of justice, or to public acts in behalf of Israel, the righteous nation, against the sinful, heathen world.—*Obtained promises*, *i.e.* received the fulfilment of them. These were special promises, not those called *the* promises, which the Old Testament saints obtained not (ver. 39). See, for example, Judg. vii. 7.—*Mouths of lions*, as Daniel, Dan. vi. 16; Samson Judg. xiv. 6; David, 1 Sam. xvii. 34.

Ver. 34. *Violence of fire*, as the three children, Dan. iii.; 1 Macc. ii. 59.—*Edge of the sword*, as David, 1 Sam. xviii. 11, xix. 10–12, Elijah, 1 Kings xix.; Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 14, and many others.—*Out of weakness* . . . as Samson, Judg. xv. 19, xvi. 28, etc.—*Waxed valiant* . . . has many illustrations in the history of Israel, although the Author may have before him the history of the Maccabees, and their gradual rise to power and victory over the "alien" foes of Israel.

Ver. 35. *Women* . . . *dead raised to life*, lit. **by a resurrection**, as the widow of Sarepta, 1 Kings xvii. 17; the Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 17.—*Were tortured*, probably stretched on the drum or wheel and beaten to death. Reference may be to Eleazar, "one of the principal scribes, an aged man," who came of his own accord to the "torment" (same word as "tortured"); comp. also the history of the seven brothers and their mother, 2 Macc. vii.—*Better resurrection*, that unto eternal life,—"better" than that spoken of in the beginning of the verse, to a life that again ended.

Ver. 36. The various sufferings to which others were exposed.

others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Ver. 37. *Were stoned*, as Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20–22; Matt. xiii. 35. There is also a tradition that Jeremiah was stoned to death in Egypt. Stoning was a common mode of capital punishment among the Jews, Deut. xiii. 10; Josh. vii. 25, etc.; Matt. xxi. 35; Acts vii.—*Were sawn asunder*, as tradition asserts of Isaiah under Manasseh. This tradition is frequently referred to in ancient times by writers both Jewish and Christian. See also the apocryphal Ascension of the Prophet Isaiah, English translation by Lawrence. Comp. 2 Sam. xii. 31; 1 Chron. xx. 3.—*Were tempted* occasions difficulty, because it refers to severe trials in the midst of three very cruel modes of putting to death. In sound the term is very like the preceding word, and some suppose that it is a repetition by mistake for this word, and would strike it out. Others would slightly alter the spelling so as to produce the meaning, they *were burnt*. The MS. authority is in favour of "were tempted," and the reference must be to some cruel tortures practised on men to procure apostasy.—*Slain with the sword*, as Urijah, the prophet, Jer. xxvi. 23; comp. 1 Kings xix. 10,—*sheepskins*, comp. perhaps 2 Kings i. 8.

Ver. 38. *Of whom . . . worthy*. The world drove them out, thinking them unworthy to live in it, while in truth it was unworthy to have them living in it.—*Caves*, of which the land of Palestine, from its limestone formation, was full, 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, xix. 8, etc.; 1 Macc. ii. 28; 2 Macc. v. 27.

Ver. 39. *Having . . . report*; or, **having had witness borne to them**, by God directly or in Scripture.—*The promise*, *i.e.* the great promises made to Abraham, and reached through the second covenant.

Ver. 40. *Some better thing*. The antithesis between "these all" and "for us" shows that in their life they had not that better thing which we in our life upon the earth have attained to. This "better thing" is that "perfection" referred to in the end of the verse, which is the full removing of sins and introduction into a condition of true covenant fellowship with God. This better thing, carrying with it the full realizing of the promise (ver. 39), God has provided for us. And God's design in denying it to them was that without us they should not be made perfect. The expression "apart from us" may mean, rather than we; but more probably, to the exclusion of us. The

XII. 1 WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with

Messianic age is the perfect age; whenever it comes, it cuts athw the life of mankind, and suspends its continuance according to t laws that now obtain (comp. Matt. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 35, etc.). H it come in the days of the fathers, later generations would not ha been born (compare the same idea in regard to the Rest, chap. iv., a extended Note). God deferred "perfection," that we of these la generations might share it, and that a fulness of mankind shou enter upon the blessing all at the same moment. The fathers, ev departed, did not obtain perfection till the offering of the S bestowed it both on them and us at once (comp. xii. 23).

Chap. xii. Return to exhortation—an exhortation now renew with all the accumulated force gathered from every verse and eve example of chap. xi.

The connection by *wherefore* (ver. 1) is with the whole scope chap. xi., but still closely with the closing words of that chapt They and we are made perfect together, and they attained to th through that faith which gave them the substance of what th hoped for, and amidst many trials and seductions—wherefore let also, surrounded as we are with so great a cloud of witnesses, . . . r with patient endurance the race set before us, looking unto Jesus.

Vers. 1–3. **Renewed exhortation to hold fast their confession, under t figure of a race.**

*Wherefore seeing we also . . . let us lay;* rather, literally, whe **fore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud witnesses, having laid aside . . . , run with patient endurance** . . . T main exhortation in the passage is: let us also (like them) . . . r with patience, etc. The passage contains—(1) As a whole a certa renewed force of exhortation and encouragement drawn from t history of the heroes of the past, of whom it is said that they and have been made perfect together, as one great assembly of mankin (2) A particular exhortation as to the preparation for the race—havi laid every weight and sin . . . (3) An exhortation as to the ra itself and the manner of running it—let us run with patient endu ance. (4) The chief example set before those exhorted is the Auth and Finisher of the faith, even Jesus (ver. 2). (5) His history as example of victorious running amidst severest obstacles, even cro and shame, having been drawn out to its final issue the great rewar the exhortation is resumed anew to draw a comparison between Hi and themselves, lest they become wearied with the strife (ver. 3).

*Cloud of witnesses* (Gr. *martyres*). The Author presents the life faith under the figure of a race (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 9, ix. 24–27; Phil. i 12–14; 1 Tim. vi. 12, etc.). It is less easy to ascertain how far l language is meant to present details of the race, whether, for examp the phrase *cloud* have any reference to the dense mass of spectato crowded into the theatre, or be a general term referring to the gre number of those whose brilliant acts of faith had been recited

great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with

chap. xi. The term *witnesses* may be explained in two ways: either *spectators* of the race which Christians now run; or *witnesses* in a different sense, persons who had witness borne to them, and themselves bear witness. It is less probable that the word should have the technical sense of *martyrs*, those who have sealed their testimony with their blood. Neither is it probable that the word is used to embrace both meanings of spectators and bearers of witness. The notion of spectators seems foreign to the connection, the point of which is not that they behold us, but that we behold them. Undoubtedly they are conceived as in a sense present, for we are surrounded by them; they and we have been made perfect together. The point, however, is the stimulus which their example and presence should be to us, not that we are running under their eye and subject to their verdict, or that they are absorbed in the interest of our struggle. Even if this last idea were contained in the words, we should not be entitled to deduce from them the dry, literal doctrine, that the saints above are conversant with our life here, and fascinated by the interest of it. Even a writer of Scripture may be allowed to throw out a brilliant ideal conception, without our tying him down to having uttered a formal doctrine.—A dear memory of one departed is more powerful to us than the example of the living. The heroes of the past are present with us in their spirit and example, and in the great deeds which they did. They surround us as a cloud, and we realize their presence, without supposing that they are conscious of us.

*Every weight.* The word means what exceeds the proper extent or mass of anything—what is superfluous. Said of a runner, the word may refer to clothing or undue fleshiness of body, or whatever would weigh him down in the race. This, if he is to run with success, must be laid aside before attempting to run. Interpreted, the reference may be to social or national connections, as those in which the Hebrews were involved; or to bodily or mental peculiarities of the individual, as love of ease (vi. 12), or esteem (xiii. 14), or wealth (x. 32–34). The things called "weights" are distinguished from "sin," and are possibly things that are to be laid aside by one who desires to run well, though in others and in their own nature they may not be objectionable, or faulty, but even comely. An appetite, though lawful, that tends to gain on one; devotion to some pursuit in danger of absorbing the mind; an affection that threatens to turn away the heart—such things are weights. The Hebrews probably were aware of the things that were so in their case; now, perhaps, we shall only become aware of them when we actually find them impeding us in the race.

*The sin which doth so easily beset;* rather, sin (*i.e.* the thing called *sin*). The phrase "that doth so easily beset" is one word, said not to occur elsewhere in Greek. It means either, *that well surrounds*, or *that is well surrounded*, or stood round about. Perhaps

2 patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus th
author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was se
before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is se

the latter is the fairer rendering. In the former case it means pro
bably, apt to surround or stand about us, that is, as a garment t
wrap us closely and entangle us, or cramp our motion. In the latte
the reference seems to be to the gathering round an object of a
admiring crowd, and the meaning would be, sin much admired. Th
idea of what we call a "besetting sin" does not lie in the passage
the thing spoken of is sin, and it is spoken of as a thing apt to fol
itself about us as a garment and impede our running; or as a thing
which, though admired, must be laid aside as an encumbrance. I
any case the reference is no doubt to the sin of turning away from th
Christian faith, which is specially sin in this Epistle. In spite of th
form of the word, this sense of "much admired" seems rathe
artificial, and the idea suggested less appropriate.—No antagonists i
the race are referred to. In ver. 4 sin is perhaps the antagonist; her
it is an entanglement to be thrown off. The obstacles are th
external trials, hardships, and reproaches, coming from the world o
men; in such a life as ours, the obstacles would be more internal
such as sin itself.—*Run with patience;* or, **patient endurance**, see o
vi. 12. This is how the race must be run.—*Set before us, i.e.* in ou
view; so Christ had the joy set before Him (ver. 2); comp. vi. 18.

Ver. 2. *Looking unto Jesus.* . . Jesus is here set before the runner
as the example on whom they are to fix their eye. His life was a
example of patient endurance; of a clear faith in the goal to b
attained (the joy); of victorious running; and of a great reward.—
*Author and finisher;* or, **leader and perfecter.** The word Author i
"Captain" in ii. 11. It is evident that Jesus is regarded here as th
pattern to be imitated, as in ver. 3 the Hebrews are exhorted to dra
a comparison between Him and themselves. The word *our* befor
faith is not expressed. The meaning cannot be therefore that a
Author He originates faith in us, and as Perfecter sustains it an
brings it to a perfect issue. Neither does "faith" seem used in th
Epistle objectively to describe the Christian system; it is a conditio
of the mind, or at most a life of which this condition is the rulin
principle, and the meaning cannot be that He is the beginning an
the end of that which we believe—such a sense is incompatible wit
the active "Perfecter." The thought seems to be that in the caree
of faith He led the way, and perfectly realized the idea, and finishe
the course of it without fail. The idea is not that He increased an
became perfect in faith as a moral condition of His own mind. Suc
a view does not seem to belong to the Epistle. He was the firs
that could be called faithful; the idea of true faith may have sug
gested itself to others, none before Him realized it. The word
"author and finisher" are expanded in the following words, *who fo
the joy*, etc. The points are: the joy set before him (the unseen an
future object of hope (xi. 1) to which faith was directed); the patien

down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not

durance of the cross (the life which this realizing of the unseen led m to); and the reward (sitting at the right hand of God).—*The joy* is at which He now reaps in sitting at the right hand of the throne of od; it is gathered here into this point, but may be supposed to anch out into all the results flowing from this, connected with man's lvation and God's good pleasure, which must also have filled His nd by anticipation while on earth, and now fill it in heaven. These ree points into which the Son's faith is analyzed are parallel to nilar things in the circumstances of the Hebrews, and His example set before them for encouragement.

Ver. 3. Express exhortation to bring themselves and Jesus into mparison.—*For consider . . .*; lit. **bring into analogy,** think of by mparing. This comparison might suggest how much greater His fferings were than theirs (and this is included); but the main idea that they should bring themselves and Him into the same class or ie and think how He endured, *i.e. patiently endured*, and thus emselves draw courage from His example.—*Such contradiction . . . mself.* Contradiction is properly in words, as, for example, denial claims put forth by another; but in a wider sense it may be said acts of opposition, including here all the hostility and hard treatent to which the Son was subjected. There is much MS. authority r a reading—*against themselves.* The most natural connection in at case would be, *sinners against themselves.* But such a peculiar rn seems improbable here; the idea looks like the conceit which me reader wrote upon his margin.—*Lest ye be wearied and faint . . .*; , **become wearied, fainting** in your minds. The words "fainting," c., explain "wearied."

Ver. 4. Unlike him who endured a cross, their resistance to sin is not yet gone the length of bloodshed.—*Ye have not yet . . . blood.* any think that the Author passes here from the figure of the race that of the pugilistic arena, and says that in their encounter with n no blood has yet flowed, meaning that the struggle has not therto been very severe. Even if such a figure be supposed, there ust lie under the figure the meaning that the persecutions to which ie Hebrews had been subjected had not yet resulted in martyrdom. rom the Apostle's mode of regarding the community to which he rites as having a historical identity (ii. 3, v. 11, etc., vi. 9, etc., x. 2, etc.), this does not mean that in their present troubles persecution ad not gone the length of bloodshed, but that in their history as a hurch they had not yet been called upon to shed their blood.—*triving against sin, i.e.* in their strife against sin. "Sin" is not ere put for sinners, nor is it sin in their persecutors; it is sin in iemselves, the sin of unbelief, which is here regarded as their true ntagonist, though of course the excesses of their persecutors gave it s power against them.

5 yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye h
forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as u
children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of
6 Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom
Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom
7 receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you
with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasten
8 not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are p

Vers. 5–13. **The true view of their sufferings: they were fathe chastisement from God meant for their discipline, and indeed proof their true sonship.**

In ver. 3 the Author exhorted them to draw a comparison tween themselves in their sufferings and the Son. Ver. 4 for the link between this and ver. 5, which says that in afflicting th God is dealing with them as with sons.—*Forgotten . . . children.* T quotation is from Prov. iii. 11, etc. The speaker there who sa My son, is probably the teacher of the youth whom he so address yet he speaks as the mouthpiece of Wisdom, and here his words considered as directly those of God to Christian men, being prophe The words are alluded to by Eliphaz, Job v. 17.

Ver. 7, etc. As usual with the Scripture which he quotes, Author first seizes the idea of the quotation, and then founds exhortation upon it. He exhibits the idea in vers. 7, 8, Ye are so your afflictions are chastisement, the chastening is evidence of y true sonship. Then follows in vers. 9, 10 the exhortation to exhi the right bearing of children under the discipline of God. T exhortation is one from the less to the greater, from the relation children to their parents on earth to the relation of sons towa God.—1. We had natural fathers as chasteners, and gave th reverence, though but fathers of our flesh; how much more sho we submit to the Father of spirits (ver. 9). 2. Their chasteni was according to their pleasure; His for our profit, that we sho partake of His holiness (ver. 10).

Vers. 7, 8. Sufferings are for chastening, and chastening is pr of true sonship.—*If ye endure, i.e.* if ye have to endure chasteni if it falls upon you—not, if ye patiently receive and bear it. For another very well supported reading is *unto;* in which case t meaning is: *it is unto* or *for* chastening that ye endure,—this is t design and meaning of your afflictions; then this idea is repeated another form in the words: God dealeth with you as with sons; a finally the idea is supported by the words of the last clause, wh states that chastisement is the portion of all sons.

Ver. 8. All lawful, genuine sons their Father chasteneth, care of their conduct and solicitous for their welfare; bastards, that children not of the true wife, but of the bondmaid (Gal. iv. 22) less carefully disciplined. This discipline is pledge and proof true sonship.—*Whereof all are partakers;* rather, have become p

takers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few

kers. The reference is historical, to the saints mentioned in chap. and others who are sons, whom history shows to have been bjected to discipline by God as His children.

Vers. 9, 10. Exhortation to the right bearing under God's chasten-g, founded on the demeanour of children to their natural parents. *Fathers . . . corrected us;* lit. fathers . . . as chasteners. These re fathers of our flesh. Flesh seems used in the Epistle always in natural material sense, and never with that shade of ethical eaning which it has in St. Paul. This is regarded as derived from e natural father.—*Father of spirits.* This might mean *Father of r spirits*, or, of all spiritual beings. This last would be a loftier signation of God, and heighten the force of the Author's argument; t if this be the meaning, man must be included among the pirits," or the argument would seem to lose its point. In Num. i. 22, xxvii. 16, God is called God of the spirits of all flesh. In en. ii. 7 He breathes into man the breath of life, while He forms his dy out of the dust of the ground. In Job xxxiii. 4 it is the Spirit God that makes man, and His breath that gives him life; and in xii. 8 there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty ves him understanding. In Zech. xii. 1, God formeth the spirit of an within him (comp. Isa. xlii. 5, lvii. 16). And in Eccles. xii. 7 is said that the spirit returns to God who gave it. It is in harmony, erefore, with the Old Testament mode of conception to regard God in closer connection with man's spiritual part than with his aterial. This method of representation, however, must not be essed into a philosophical theory of creationism, that is, a theory the effect that while the material side of man's being is transmitted om natural parents, his spirit is in each case the immediate product God's creative power. It is as a spirit, or on his spiritual side, that an enters into close relation with God; and this leads to the con-ption that God is more especially the Author of man's spirit, or uthor of man on his spiritual side, and to designations such as ose in Num. xvi. 22, etc.—*And live, i.e.* as the effect of subjection God's salutary correction; comp. Prov. x. 17, he is in the way of e that observeth discipline; xxiii. 13, withhold not correction from e child, if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die.

Ver. 10. The general argument of ver. 9, We gave reverence to our tural parents as chasteners, though but fathers of our flesh. Shall e not much rather be in subjection to the Father of our spirits? is forced by exhibiting how the chastening of two such different hers must be and is so different, and how much more salutary that the Father of our spirits is.—*For a few days . . . their own plea-re.* The chastisement of natural parents is after their own easure, or as seems good to them: even when most conscientious

days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for
11 profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. Now
chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievo
nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit

and affectionate and wise, there may be an element of passion
certainly of misjudgment in it; for what parent can perfectly estim
the offence and the circumstances, or, above all, with true insi
gauge the temper and the nature of the child he chastens? Furth
the chastening of natural parents is but for a few days; our relati
to them are such that as life advances it ceases. Yet though
subjection to them is only for a time by the very law of life,
though their chastening may often be capricious and always mark
by error of excess or defect or misdirection, we gave them reverer
—*But he for our profit . . . holiness.* Unlike that of earthly pare
the chastening of the Father of our spirits is without fail for our pr
in His infinite wisdom and skill as framer of the spirit, and love
Father. The words, *that we might be partakers of his . . . holiness*,
plain "for our profit;" this is the profit he intends and which he bri
about. "Holiness" or sanctity in God is properly separation or
tance from the world and elevation above it; holiness in men is se
ration from the world and dedication unto God. In both cases the w
expresses in the first instance a relation. But God who is separa
from the world has attributes, of purity and the like, which dist
guished Him from the world; and men who are devoted to Him,
being so, must share these characteristics. God's design in chast
ing men is to remove them more and more from community with
world, and make them more dedicated unto Himself and like H
This idea of "holiness" is that in which the antithesis lies to "fo
few days." The meaning is not that our earthly parents chaste
us with reference to the few days of our earthly life, but God w
reference to eternity; for this would not justly describe the scope
parent's chastisement, either in his own intention or in fact; no
the meaning that their chastisement was for the brief term of
youth, but God's is life-long. What the Author means to bring
by saying that the chastisement of earthly parents is for a few da
is the brevity and comparative unimportance of our connection w
our natural parents; their chastisement is for a short time as
duration of our relation to them is short, and indeed their chasti
ment, if wise, has in view to make us able to be independent of the
God's chastening has another view, to make us partakers of
holiness, to unite us to Him in character and likeness more
more. It is not the duration of the chastisement that is the po
of the passage; it is the duration of our relation in each case to
who chastens.

Ver. 11. General statement, for the sake of encouragement, of
effects of chastisement. It is bitter indeed when suffered, but af
wards its profit appears.—*Yieldeth the peaceable . . . righteousness;*
**peaceful fruit, even that of righteousness.** The fruit which chasten

12 righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Where-
fore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;
13 and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame

yields is righteousness; it is also peaceful, that is, not preserving or keeping peace, nor yet a fruit enjoyed in peace, but a fruit whose quality is peace. There may lie in "peaceful" a certain antithesis to "exercised thereby." The peace of those who through the conflicts of chastening become partakers of the divine holiness and attain righteousness, will be all the deeper from the previous strife, like the great calm when the storm is stilled.

Vers. 12, 13. Application practically of this doctrine of the uses of adversity. It is doubtful if there is any return in the words of ver. 12 to the figure of the race. The metaphors are common to express slackness and faint-heartedness and mental flagging where the formal conception of a race is not present (comp. Isa. xxxv. 3). Those exhorted are the whole community, and the exhortation probably includes "lifting up" each one his own hands as well as those of others—to be strong oneself and to help to strengthen others (Job iv. 3, 4). This reference to others appears clearly in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *Straight paths for your feet.* The words may mean also *with your* feet. The passage, Prov. iv. 26, which is before the Author's mind, means "make even the path of thy foot," where path of thy foot means merely thy path. The fairest rendering of this would be "with thy feet," the reference not being to the preparation of a path in which to go, but to actual walking. It is not certain, however, that the Author so means the translation of the Septuagint which he has adopted. The exhortation is to the whole community, especially to those that are strong (Rom. xiv. 1, xv. 1), to walk in an even path, that is a plain, consistent, straightforward course of Christian life, for the sake of those that are weak, here called, in conformity with the figure, *lame.* The unevennesses suggested are, of course, hesitations and vacillations between Christian faith and Judaism or other tendencies, or moral inconsistencies out of harmony with the life of Christians. Such an uneven or devious path could not be followed by the lame, those of the community whose halting was either temporary or had become organic.—*Turned out of the way . . . healed.* If the path taken and made by the community was straight and even, those members who were lame might the more easily follow it, and by use their lameness (which had probably arisen from the inequalities of the way) would disappear and be healed. The words "turned out of the way" mean in medical writers "dislocated," and this gives a more vigorous sense and forms a better opposition to "be healed." Inconsistency and vacillation in the general body of the church would create a way so difficult for the lame, that their lameness would become dislocation, and they would perish from the way; on the other hand, the habit of going in a plain path would restore them to soundness.

14 be turned out of the way ; but let it rather be healed. Follow
peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall
15 see the Lord : looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace
of God ; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*

Vers. 14–17. **Exhortation to follow peace and holiness.**

As usual (comp. x. 23, 24), the exhortation widens out from being one so to live that others may profit by their example, into an exhortation to make the universal godliness of the whole community a matter of direct and formal care and solicitude. The exhortation is strengthened by reference to the disastrous effects of any impure element arising among them — first, upon the general community (ver. 15); and second, upon the unholy members themselves (vers. 16, 17).

Ver. 14. *Follow peace ;* or, **follow after.** "Peace" here does not seem to refer, as in Rom. xiv. 1, etc., to disputes regarding doctrine or practice. The reference is rather to the breaks in the uniformity of Christian life and sentiment, which were the result of the uncertainties creeping in among the Hebrews in regard to the great matters of the Christian faith (x. 25). There is no proof that such questions had become matters of formal disputation, embittering men's minds and alienating them from one another. What is hinted at is rather the gradual falling away from one another of the elements of the church through the silent disintegration and decay produced by inward uncertainty and the wearing effects of the forces without them ; and the exhortation to follow after peace is not one merely to agree to differ but one to seek to remove the difference, and to bring all into that harmony of feeling and uniformity of mind and faith which is the condition of true peace. This might imply much self-restraint and patient solicitude on the part of those who had to treat that which was lame, and after the best endeavours many dissimilarities would still remain. But the exhortation is not merely to exhibit a peaceful spirit towards one another, but to seek to bring about the true conditions of Christian unity, when each member of the body performs its own functions aright, and the whole acts harmoniously.—*And holiness ;* or, **that sanctification,** or **consecration.** This being the larger idea, explains and covers the lesser one of "peace with all." As when the tide recedes the waters fret and raise angry surfs upon the sunken rocks, but when it has advanced in full flow these rocks are submerged and there is deep stillness over them, so in the full tide of consecration unto God all causes of disquietude are swallowed up and covered.—The "Lord" here is probably God, not Christ, owing to the connection with the idea of sanctification. This consecration, as the following shows, embraces not only faith in the Christian truths, but also Christian life (Matt. v. 8).

Ver. 15, etc. Development of the idea "follow after peace" and "the sanctification."—*Any man fail . . .* ; lit. **lest any man falling short of the grace of God—lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you.** The construction seems to be suspended at the word

6 and thereby many be defiled; lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his

God, and a new subject introduced, or the same subject under a more general notion. A "man falling short" may not be quite identical with a "root of bitterness," but it is an example of the lass. A root of bitterness is not a root causing bitterness, *e.g.* an xacerbated state of mind of one member against another; it is a itter or poisonous root, which springing up causes destruction round it, or bears fruit which is deadly (comp. Deut. xxix. 18). uch a bitter root in Old Testament times was Achan, who troubled" Israel (Josh. vii. 25), and such bitter roots were those ho turned away to false gods and seduced others; comp. the assage in Deut. which was before the Apostle's mind.—On grace f God, see x. 29. To fail of this or come short of it embraces not nly renunciation of the faith of Christ, but all acts by which sanctification" unto God was imperilled, as those of sensuality er. 16). The Hebrews are exhorted to look diligently that such lements do not manifest themselves among them. Their baneful ffects would appear in "defiling" many, or the many; the infection ight spread to the whole community, and their holiness unto the ord be forfeited.

Vers. 16, 17. From the danger to the community the Author asses to the awful effects for themselves of men's falling short of ne grace of God.—*Any fornicator* . . . It is most probable that the ord is to be taken in its natural sense (xiii. 4), and not in the mean- ng of one committing spiritual whoredom, that is, being unfaithful the true God. In this latter sense the word is rather applied a community or a collective, as a city. It is more difficult to ecide whether the term be applied to Esau. Esau is so described later Jewish theology, and Philo interprets "hairy" man as "in- mperate and licentious." It is perhaps more probable that the ructure of the verse is similar to that of the preceding. There the ore particular "coming short of the grace of God" was taken up y the more general "root of bitterness," to which last the details the verse were appended; so here "fornicator" is taken up by the ore general "profane person like Esau," concerning whom details e then added. The whole passage is an expansion of the ex- ortation in ver. 14, "follow that sanctification," etc.; both the par- cular "fornication" and even the more general "profaneness" fringe it.—*Profane person.* A man of a common type of mind, evoted to lower and earthly pursuits, without love or appreciation what is nobler and spiritual.—*His birthright* embraced not erely rights which primogeniture gave him to possessions, but the ght that the spiritual blessings of the covenant should descend to m and through him to the world. In his light profanity and ability to estimate such blessings, he bartered them away for the eans of satisfying an immediate appetite.

Ver. 17. In this verse the rendering depends on the reference of

17 birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no

the last clause—that is, whether what Esau sought with tears was the blessing or repentance. Taking the former meaning, the words "for he found no place of repentance," fall into a parenthesis: when he desired to inherit the blessing he was rejected (for he found no place of repentance), though he sought it carefully with tears. If it was repentance that he sought, the verse reads as in the English Version.—*For ye know . . . would have inherited;* or, **ye know how that even when he afterward desired to inherit.** The term "repentance" here is used not strictly of mere change of mind, but of a change of mind undoing the effects of a former state of mind. Place of repentance in this sense Esau could not find; his act so far as his birthright was concerned was final, the past was irreparable. Further, the repentance which Esau sought was repentance on his own part, not on that of his father Isaac. The language, "he found no place of repentance," is very unnatural if its meaning be he found no means of bringing his father to a change of purpose. Taking repentance in this *real* or material sense, and not simply as an act of the mind, it matters little to the meaning whether we consider this or the blessing to be what Esau earnestly sought. It is most natural to suppose it was the blessing, and this construction is fairest to the language of the verse. Esau as the first-born of Isaac was the natural heir of the blessings of the covenant. This prerogative he threw away. He was so insensible to such privilege that he sold them for one morsel of meat. This act became final. When he desired to inherit the blessing afterward, though he sought it earnestly with tears, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, no possibility of undoing his own past act. This is the lesson of his history for those Hebrews who were in danger of sinning wilfully. We are apt to raise questions here which would hardly occur to the Writer, such as the question, Was Esau's a true repentance? or, Can a true repentance ever be too late? We may be in danger of missing the broad, practical lesson of the Author, that by a superficial levity and insensibility to what is high and spiritual we may let go by opportunities of grace which we shall in vain seek to recall. Again, we might raise the question, Whether Esau by placing himself outside of the line through which the blessings of the covenant were transmitted, forfeited personal salvation? Such a distinction would hardly occur to the Author. We may perhaps draw it. Those tears of Esau, the sensuous, wild, impulsive man's almost like the cry of some "trapped creature," are among the most pathetic in the Bible.

Vers. 18–29. **Final contrast of the two dispensations.**

These verses form a grand finale to the strain of exhortation to hold fast their confession, carried on since x. 19, in the form of an impressive contrast between the two dispensations—the first sensible, and, though very awful in the manifestations of God, yet, because sensible and

place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

his world, only provisional; the second supersensible and heavenly, gathering together in one all things that can be named *realities*, and or this reason final—and if they escaped not who refused to hear God speaking in the first, "on earth," how shall we escape if we turn away from Him now speaking "from heaven" (comp. ii. 1–4).

Though the verses form the splendid finale to the whole passage from x. 19, the thought arises naturally out of vers. 14–17. The exhortation there to follow after holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, was sharpened by the awful example of Esau, whose too late repentance availed him nothing. This was an example pertinent to the Hebrews, before whom in close proximity stood the impending judgment (x. 27–30, 36–39). To this point attaches itself the passage, ver. 18, etc., which contains, condensed into a graphic antithesis of the two dispensations, a final effort of the Apostle to put before his readers what will move them to hold fast their hope firm unto the end. The picture of the first revelation of God with its accompanying terrors is given in vers. 18–21; the contrasted picture of the new revelation with all those realities that it unveils, in vers. 22–24. Then follows in vers. 25–29 the exhortation based on the contrast, and to support which the contrast was introduced.

The passage has difficulties arising from uncertainty as to the true text, and also as to the reference in some of the expressions. 1. In ver. 18 the word "mount" is absent from the best witnesses, and it is difficult to decide whether to supply it, holding that it was in the Author's mind from the contrast he had in view in ver. 22, or to omit it wholly, and couple the phrase, "that might be touched" with "fire"—unto a palpable and kindled fire. 2. The word *and*, so rhetorically and impressively reiterated, unquestionably in general introduces a *new* element in the picture, and this creates a certain presumption that it always does so. But, of course, the decision come to in regard to "mount" will affect this presumption. The point is important in ver. 23. 3. The complete absence from the passage of the definite *the* before any of the terms used implies that the Author was intentionally general, and that the objects he accumulates are not enumerated merely for the sake of the particular meaning which each may have, but because they are all examples of one class, and agree in illustrating one general idea. 4. This general idea of the two pictures respectively is given in the one case in the phrase, "that might be touched," that is, palpable, an object of the *senses*, ver. 18; and in the other in the term "heavenly," that is, supersensible and ideal. The first revelation and manifestation of God, and the whole economy corresponding to it, was sensible, in phenomena of this world; the second is supersensible, in things of the true ideal, heavenly world. This difference carries with it another, which comes to be the true point of difference: that which is sensible is temporary and provisional, that which is heavenly and real is abiding and final (comp. ver. 27). It has been thought that the Author intended to

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched
and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness

emphasize a double antithesis between the dispensations, and to signalize the first as—(1) sensible, and in the form of phenomena of this world; and (2) as surrounded with terrors, a dispensation of fear—in contrast with the second, which is (1) heavenly and supersensible, and (2) a dispensation of grace. But the terrors that gathered about the first revelation do not seem insisted on as a characteristic of this revelation, constituting its difference from the second, for the second has also its terrors,—we are come unto a Judge who is God of all (ver. 23), and our God is a consuming fire (ver. 29) and He shall again shake terribly the earth (vers. 26, 27; Isa. ii. 19). The first revelation was terrible, *although* only a manifestation of God in sensible forms and but provisional, and carried with it sore punishment to all who disobeyed it (ver. 25; comp. ii. 2, etc., x. 28 etc.), and much sorer will be our punishment if we neglect the second. 5. The expression, "ye are come unto," describing the position of Israel before Sinai, ver. 18, is the same as that which describes the position of the Hebrews before the true heavenly things, ver. 22. The word is often used of drawing near in the specific act of worship (iv. 16, vii. 25, x. 1, 22, xi. 6), but it has here naturally a more general sense. The Author is no doubt referring to the privileges of the Hebrews, which are greater than those of them under the first covenant, and every object which he enumerates is fitted to carry with it a powerful persuasiveness to their minds but he has more particularly in view the responsibility which these privileges create, and the condemnation they involve if neglected. And when he says to the Hebrews, Ye are come unto Mount Zion he means, That which ye stand in the presence of, as Israel stood in the presence of Sinai with its manifestations, is the heavenly Zion all the things that are real, the world of things essential and final. He seems to combine two ideas. They were come to them, for the word spoken to them had unveiled them. Their place in the march of the economies, in the destiny of the world, was face to face with the sphere of things real and eternal (ii. 1, xiii. 7, x. 19). But they were come to them in another sense: they stood but a little on this side of the great transformation scene, which, when it passed, would perfectly reveal and leave for ever all those "things themselves," the things having the attribute of reality, and gathered together in that true sphere of the real, even heaven.

Vers. 18–21. The first revelation on Sinai, with its accompaniments, type of the first covenant—material, but terrible.

It is fairest to keep the indefinite form of expression and to repeat the word *unto* before each separate object enumerated: for ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and unto kindled fire, and unto blackness, and unto darkness, etc.—The word "mount" is absent from the best text, and it is difficult to decide how to regard the omission. It may have been in the Author's mind, when he said

19 and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of
words; which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word
20 should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not
endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a
beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through
21 with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I
22 exceedingly fear and quake:) but ye are come unto mount
Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeru-

"that which is touched," *i.e.* palpable and materially sensible; or the word palpable may go with fire—a palpable and kindled fire. It is perhaps fairest to take "fire" as a distinct item in the enumeration—a kindled fire, rather than, (a mount) that burned with fire.—The passage emphasizes the material, elemental character of the revelation, as well as the accompanying terrors.

Vers. 19, 20. The terror culminated in the command to slay even the beast that might touch the mount. This indiscriminate destructiveness, which condemned to death even the "dumb, driven cattle," the people could not bear (Ex. xix. 12, xx. 19). The clause, "or thrust through with a dart" (Ex. xix. 13), seems an addition.

Ver. 21. Moses is nowhere represented in the Old Testament as uttering these precise words; though comp. Deut. ix. 19. Possibly the Author was in possession of other traditions. On the giving of the Law, see Ex. xix., xx.

Vers. 22–24. The contrasted picture of the scene of the new covenant revelation and the things unveiled in it, to which the Hebrews are come,—things supersensible and real, and thus final and abiding.

The same indefiniteness marks the language here: But ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto a city of the living God, Jerusalem in heaven, and unto tens of thousands, a general assembly of angels etc.—Every one of these objects enumerated has a profound meaning of its own, and the mention of it appeals with a powerful persuasiveness; but all the objects may be gathered up under one general idea, they are supersensible, belonging to the ideal reality in existence and in salvation: they are "things themselves," the final form of all that is, and they are gathered together in the abode and sphere of that which is real and ultimate, the heavens.—As there was a Zion below, in the forms of this world, there is one above, which is true and ideal. As there was a city of God below, Jerusalem, there is a true ideal one in the heavens—that on earth was the abode of God in symbol, that above is the city of the living God, where He is present in truth in all His vitality and in the fulness of His being. It is perhaps to press the separate enumeration too much to make a distinction between Mount Zion and the city of God, and to regard the one as the transcendent sphere of God's existence, where He is manifested only to Himself, and the other as the place where His people gather and where He is manifested to them. The idea that God "is His own place," or that His people are not where He is, seems quite foreign to the Epistle,

23 salem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to th

and is the introduction of a metaphysical notion into the midst c conceptions which are purely physical and local.—Ver. 22 shoul have ended here. From describing the place, and the true idea things, corresponding to sensible things here on earth, the Autho passes to the dwellers in this heavenly city.

Those that abide in the city of God.—*An innumerable company c angels . . .* ; lit. **and unto tens of thousands.** These words, alon with those in ver. 23, may be taken in various ways :—(1) And unt tens of thousands of Angels, a general assembly and congregation c first-borns enrolled in heaven. Here the only subject is Angels, wh are described as in numbers tens of thousands, and as an assembl and congregation of first-borns enrolled in heaven. (2) And unt tens of thousands, a general assembly of Angels, and a congregatio (church) of first-borns enrolled in heaven. Here a great body, i number tens of thousands, is supposed made up of two classes— general assembly of Angels, and a church or congregation of firs borns enrolled in heaven, the latter being redeemed men. (3) An unto tens of thousands, a general assembly of Angels, and unto church (congregation) of first-borns enrolled in heaven. Here ther are the same two classes as in (2), but the phrase tens of thousanc refers to the assembly of Angels alone. There are other less plausib combinations. As between (2) and (3), which agree in *sense*, the balanc seems to lie in favour of (3). The phrase, "tens of thousands," is almo technical in the Old Testament for the numbers of Angels, Deu xxxiii. 2 ; Ps. lxviii. 17 ; Dan. vii. 10 ; Jude v. 14 ; and its application men or to men and Angels inclusive is less probable. Between (1) an (3) it is more difficult to decide. Apart from special objections arisin from some of the terms used, as "church" and "first-born," (1) is th more natural and simple. The Angels as dwellers in the city of Go are in place here. Further, it is difficult to see why the Author shoul intercalate the New Testament church, for to this the words "churc of the first-born" must refer if understood of men, beside them, whi he refers to the Old Testament believers, under the name of "spiri of just men," afterwards and separately. And perhaps a strong argument is this. The Author, in speaking to the Hebrews, seen nowhere to regard them as a mere community in the bosom of th general Christian church ; they are the Christian church. Th antithesis he puts is always one between them and the Old Test ment church. Nowhere does he bring to bear upon them th example of other Christians ; his exhortations and his warnings a all drawn from the Old Testament church (comp. chaps. iii., iv xi., xii.). They stand parallel to it. They are the church of th New Testament which the Holy Spirit warned in Ps. xcv. They a those with whom God reasoneth as with sons (xii. 5). They stan in contrast with Israel, who came to Sinai, in having come un God's true abode and revelation of Himself. It is as the Ne Testament church that they are come to this, not as a communi

general assembly and church of the first-born, which are within it. The only case where he appeals to the example of Christians is xiii. 7, where he exhorts them to remember those who had been their rulers and spoke to them the word of God (comp. ii. 3). These were the apostolic missionaries who communicated to them the words of Jesus, men now departed. But obviously these men, as those who reported the revelation spoken by the Son, stand in a manner apart from the Christian church, for their words formed the very condition of its faith and existence. It is natural to suppose, when the Author says to the Hebrews, Ye are come to Mount Zion, and then enumerates all those realities which are there, that he speaks to the Hebrews as the church of Christians, and that the real and final things enumerated are in contrast with them, and have their abode already truly in heaven, and not merely prospectively. On these general considerations (1) has very great probability in its favour. Objections to it and in favour of (3) are such as these: (1) There is a presumption that the *and* before "church of the first-born" introduces a new subject. This presumption must be conceded, though ver. 18 may invalidate its force in some measure. (2) The word rendered "church" or congregation usually refers to the People of God. This is the case; in Ps. lxxxix. 5, however, it is certainly used of the saints or "holy ones," that is, the sons of God (vers. 6, 7) or Angels, and little weight can be laid on its general usage, which arises from the nature of the case. (3) So the term "first-born" as used in the Epistle seems to carry with it the idea of privilege and heirship (i. 6, xii. 16), and in this view it seems improbable that the Angels should be called first-born (see on i. 9); the name is more likely to have been given to men, fellow-heirs with the Son (i. 6, ii. 5, etc.). All this is true, and yet from another point of view "first-born," in contrast with men, is a name that might readily be bestowed on Angels as created earlier than men (comp. Job xxxviii. 7), and original dwellers in the heavenly city. (4) Further, it is thought that the expression, "enrolled in heaven," is more likely, from the usage of similar phrases (comp. Isa. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1; Luke x. 20; Rev. xxi. 27), to be used of men, those destined to be the dwellers in the heavenly city, rather than of Angels, already dwelling there. The word, however, might very well describe the roll of actual citizens. If it referred to the New Testament church, it would describe its members as heirs of the world to come, whose rights and destinies are indicated by their being enrolled in heaven. But why should this title of "first-born" in this sense be bestowed exclusively on the New Testament church, and the church of the Old Testament, certainly fellow-heirs with it, be otherwise described? If the expression apply to the New Testament church, and to this *in general*, and not to any particular class of New Testament believers, such as early saints and martyrs, it must apply if it do not describe the Angels, the emphasis and meaning of the whole expression falls on the term "enrolled." The Author is

written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the
24 spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator
of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that

setting before the Hebrews all those last things, things in their true and final state, to which they are come,—the city of the living God the myriads, the Angels, dwelling there; the church of first-borns citizens too, for their names are enrolled there—it is to this church *under this view*, not as upon earth, but as one great group ideally in heaven, for they are enrolled there, that the Hebrews are come. But it has already been noticed that all the other groups and figures to which they are come are already actually in heaven, and this mingling of the prospective and actual is less probable, not to recall again the view of the Epistle that the Hebrews themselves form this New Testament church.

The word "general assembly" means a festal assembly (Gr. *panegyris*, the festal assembly of the whole nation, as at the Olympic games). The Angels are here regarded as gathered all together not as sent forth to do service (i. 14), and as full of joy (comp. Luke xv. 10).

*And to God the Judge of all;* lit. **and unto a judge** (who is) **God of all**; or, **and as judge unto the God of all.** Whether this translation be adopted or the English Version retained matters little. The words again express the reality and finality of that to which the Hebrews are come; it is to God in these universal relations. The words indicate an effort on the Writer's part to deny all that is intermediate or partial in the relations to his creatures or in his manifestations of God, to whom the Hebrews are now come. Israel came to Him manifested in the forms of this world, and it was even only Israel that came. The Hebrews are come to Him as God of all, and as Judge.—It seems wholly contrary to the scope of the passage to find the idea of the graciousness of God here, and to draw the meaning from the words that the Hebrews may without fear approach to God though He is the Judge. Equally without support is the meaning that He will do judgment for them. It is to Him in this widest and absolute character that they are come; comp. x. 30.

*Spirits of just men* . . . The Old Testament saints, now already in heaven and made perfect through the offering of the Son (vii. 11, x. 14, xi. 40). On the epithet "just," see xi. 4, 7.

Ver. 24. There is no reason to suppose that there is any exact parallelism between the particulars of vers. 18–21 and those of vers. 22–24. The link in the Author's mind connecting one distinct subject with another will appear different, perhaps, to different readers. If the phrase, "congregation of first-borns," refer to Angels, the secution occasions no difficulty; otherwise the order of particulars is less natural, or at least its principle is more difficult to detect. The reference to the "perfection" of the just men of former ages naturally introduced mention of the Mediator of the new covenant. The great assemblage of things final and absolute is closed by that which introduces the

5 speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. See that ye refuse
not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused
him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape* if we

nality and enables the eternal things to be realized, the blood of
prinkling.—This speaketh *better things;* or, **better than that of Abel**
or, than Abel), *i.e.* it speaks more powerfully, appeals more mightily
o God than did the blood of His martyred saint (xi. 4).

Vers. 25–29. Warning against turning away from God, speaking
n His final and true revelation of Himself and all things, "from
eaven," founded on the guilt incurred by Israel, who refused Him
hen He spoke in that less perfect revelation, "on earth."

He that spake on earth and He that speaketh from heaven is alike
od. Everywhere in the Epistle it is God who "speaks," although
Ie may employ agents, prophets, Angels, or the Son, or even those who
eard the Son (ii. 3, xiii. 7). There is no reference in this passage to
ese agents. In the Old Testament revelation God spake on "earth."
Iis words were heard (ver. 19) by Israel from Sinai, to which they
ad come. This revelation in its place and manner is the type of the
rst covenant. All through history what Israel heard was this voice
f words from an earthly mountain sounding in their ears. This
evelation of God in forms of this world or "on earth" Israel refused
o hear, and its refusal was but a type of its obstinacy all down its
istory. Now God speaks "from heaven." Heaven is the true
bode of God, where He appears all that He is in Himself, and where
Ie is surrounded by all that to which the attribute of reality belongs.
'o Israel He spoke on earth, in forms that but revealed Him medi-
tely and partly concealed Him, and the things He showed to Israel
ere but "copies" of the true eternal things in heaven. Now He
peaks from heaven, from where He is in truth, and this implies that
Ie speaks as He is in truth, and His revelation unveils not only
Iimself, but all things that are true and abiding. The Apostle
ssumes, as he everywhere does, that the Son made known God as
Ie is in truth, revealed and did His final will (comp. x. 5, etc.)
salvation, and unveiled to men the whole heavenly world of
uth. But just as God's voice from Sinai sounded in the ears of
srael through all the ages of its history, His word to us in the
on is heard by us as long as it is called To-day (iii. 15). God
peaks to us with a continuous voice. The *figure* in the Author's
ind being a local one, compresses two historical points into one.
he Son revealed God as He is in Himself, and all the ideal world of
uth in its abode in heaven. This revelation, as by the wand of the
agician, called up all these realities before our eyes. We are come
o them and stand before them. This point, however, that the word
f the Son presented these heavenly things to us, is left in the back-
round. We are conceived face to face with them, and from where they
re—heaven, where God is in His true being—there comes forth to
s continuously the voice of God—He speaketh from heaven. And
Israel drew chastisement on itself by refusing Him that spake on

26 turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: whose voi
then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, sayin
Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heave
27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing
those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, th
28 those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefo
we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us ha
grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reveren
29 and godly fear: for our God *is* a consuming fire.

earth, much more shall we, turning away from Him that speake
from heaven.

Ver. 26. This warning is made more impressive by reference to th
accompaniments of the divine speaking in the two revelations respe
tively. A shaking accompanied God's speaking from Sinai; but
was only of the earth; and it was temporary, and subsided, leavin
the frame of things as it was: a shaking shall follow Goc
speaking from heaven, more pervasive and with more imposin
effects; this shaking shall grasp both heaven and earth, and amid
it the things that are made and of this material creation, and whi
can be shaken, shall pass away, leaving behind the world of tru
essential existence that cannot be shaken, the inheritance of th
saints (ver. 28).—The Author finds an emphasis to lie in the wor
*yet once more*, or **yet once**, of the prophecy Hagg. ii. 6, implying th
finality of the shaking, and the removing through it of the sensib
material world, the things that are made. And this removing is
order to the manifesting and the abiding of the true ideal world whi
cannot be shaken, but remains and becomes the heritage of m
redeemed (ii. 5, etc.).

Ver. 28. When amidst this shaking the material creation pass
away, there remains the kingdom that cannot be shaken, the world
come, the destined heritage of men (ii. 5; Dan. vii. 18); and th
this inheritance may be ours, *let us have grace;* comp. ver. 15.
another Apostle says, Let us have peace with God (Rom. v. 1
and yet another, Give diligence to make your calling and electi
sure, that is, not to make yourselves assured of it, but to make
secure and stable (Heb. ii. 2, 3) in itself (2 Pet. i. 10).—*Serve G*
. . . *reverence and godly fear;* or, **with godly fear** (v. 7) **and aw**
comp. ix. 14.

Ver. 29. *For our God* . . . ; or, **for indeed** our God (so iv. 2). S
Deut. iv. 24. These words add a final and awful warning, and fi
close the strain of solemn appeal begun in ver. 14.

Chap. xiii. **Exhortations to sundry duties.**

Ver. 1. **To brotherly love.**—The Apostle says, let it *continue*, for
had already commended this virtue in the Hebrews, vi. 10; com
x. 34 with x. 24. See 1 Pet. i. 22; 2 Pet. i. 7. There is no reas

XIII. 1, 2 LET brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to
entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels
3 unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound
with them; *and* them which suffer adversity, as being your-
4 selves also in the body. Marriage *is* honourable in all, and
the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God
5 will judge. *Let your* conversation *be* without covetousness;
*and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said,

to imagine that he recommends this virtue because he saw signs of its being on the decline.

Ver. 2. **To kindness to strangers.**—The "strangers" referred to are Christian brethren from other places. To these, whether pursuing the means of living or perhaps fleeing from hardships falling on them in their own homes, the Hebrews are to extend hospitality. This was a sacred duty. It was also a privilege, for such guests brought many times more than they received.—*Angels unawares;* comp. Gen. xviii., xix. The Angels are the immediate ministers of God and His providence. Through such hospitality men sometimes brought themselves into currents of thought and life new to them, currents flowing directly from God Himself.

Ver. 3. **To sympathy with those in affliction.**

*As bound with them, i.e.* probably, as if bound with them; have the same feeling for them as if ye shared their bonds. Or, the meaning may be that being all members of one body they did share their bonds, and the exhortation may be one to call this to remembrance and act in the spirit of this profound idea (1 Cor. xii. 26).—*Also in the body, i.e.* as men still living on the earth in the body, and liable to the same sufferings as they endure.

Ver. 4. **To chastity.**—*Marriage is honourable . . . undefiled;* rather, **et marriage be held in honour . . . and let the bed be undefiled.** The clause is an exhortation to hold marriage in honour, not, however, positively as against celibacy and ascetic abstinence, but, as the last clause of the verse shows, as against impure and unlawful relations; and the second clause is an injunction to hold sacred this married relation. There seems no allusion in the passage to ascetic tendencies or to persons forbidding to marry, 1 Tim. iv. 3. The exhortation is against unchastity. The Author desires to lift up marriage to its true place and give men true views of it as a fundamental relation in society and the law of God. From the connection, *in all* seems rather to mean *among all*, than, in all respects. Comp. 1 Thess. iv. 6.

Ver. 5. **Against covetousness.**—*Your conversation*, lit. **manner** (of mind), *i.e.* turn or disposition.—*For he hath said, i.e.* God. The exact words quoted are not found in the Old Testament, but see Deut. xxxi. 6. It is remarkable that the words as here used are found in Philo, *De Conf. Ling.* chap. xxxiii.

Ver. 6. *So that we may . . . say;* rather, **so that we boldly say.**—

6 I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we ma
boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear wh
7 man shall do unto me. Remember them which have th
rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God
whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation

*I will not fear what . . .*; rather, **I will not fear; what shall . . .** See Ps. cxviii. 6; comp. Ps. xxvii. 1, xvi. 8, lvi. 4, 11.

Vers. 7–16. **To have in their remembrance the teaching and examp of the apostolic missionaries, now departed, who first taught them.**

The passage vers. 7–16 unquestionably all hangs together. Ther would be no meaning in exhorting the Hebrews to remember the former teachers unless the exhortation were an indirect way of exhor ing them not to swerve from the faith in the form in which thos departed teachers had delivered it to them. This is indeed expresse in the words, "the which spoke to you the word of God." Then th positive advice to remember, etc., takes the negative shape of a exhortation not to be carried away by strange teachings, ver. 9. Th again passes into a contrast between the principle of Christianit "grace," and that of such teaching, "meats," ver. 9. This the widens out into the statement that they who adhere to the principl of such teachings have no part in the Christian sacrifice, vers. 10–12 which passes into an exhortation wholly to break connection with th camp of the unbelieving Old Testament Israel, within which thi principle prevailed, ver. 13, etc.

Ver. 7. *Them who have . . . have spoken;* rather, **them who ha the rule . . . who spoke.** Those referred to are the deceased apostoli missionaries who first brought the gospel to them. That these ar the persons referred to is plain from the words, "who spoke to you th word of God," ii. 3, iv. 2; and that they no more lived is implied i the words, *the issue*, or end, *of their life.—Whose faith follow . . conversation;* lit. **and, contemplating** (surveying, or looking back upo **the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.** The term "issue or end of their life does not imply that their death was throug martyrdom—they died in faith. The two points in connection wit which the Hebrews are to remember them are—first, the word God which they spoke, the teaching by which they evangelized th Hebrews; and second, the manner and end of their own life of faitl In this there is an indirect appeal to the Hebrews themselves not t decline from the form of the apostolic doctrine as they had firs received it; and second, to let this doctrine sustain their life, as the had seen it sustain the life of their first teachers. It is certainl probable that this Apostle feels himself in accord with these firs preachers to the Hebrews, and that these therefore had stood o the same free platform in regard to ceremonial as he stands upo Out of this freedom certain influences were moving the Hebrews t fall back (ver. 9).

Ver. 8. *Jesus . . . the same . . .*; rather, lit. **Jesus Christ is yeste**

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.
9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For

**ay and to-day the same, and for ever.** The English Version by mitting *is* suggests that Jesus Christ is the "end" of their conversa-on (ver. 7); but this cannot be, for these last words mean, issue of ieir manner of life. The verse corresponds to ver. 7, and sustains its xhortation. These teachers spoke the word of God, they reported nd confirmed (ii. 3) the things spoken by the Son, and He was also ie subject of which they spoke; and their faith in the unseen was ustained by His sacrifice and His ascension as High Priest to God's ght hand (x. 19, 21). And He is the same now as when they spoke f Him and when their faith was sustained by Him. The words yesterday," "to-day," etc., are not to be referred to particular periods, s if "yesterday" described the days of these early apostolic teachers; ie whole expression graphically describes the unchangeableness of esus Christ, whether respect be had to teaching or to life by faith, nd forms a delicate but deeply-laid support to the exhortation in er. 7 to remember the teaching and life of those who first enlightened iem—which is, indeed, an exhortation to themselves not to be moved way from the faith and the life of their own early Christian history.

Ver. 9. *Be not carried about . . .*; rather, **be not carried away**, or **side** (ii. 1). This is the other side of "remember," etc., ver. 7. Remember them who spoke to you the word of God (ver. 7); this is o variable teaching: Jesus Christ is ever the same (ver. 8); be not, ien, carried away with strange doctrines (ver. 9). These strange achings (1) were in regard to meats (ver. 9). (2) They are regarded s connected with the principles of Judaism, for the Christian altar is oken of in opposition to them (ver. 10), and the Apostle adds in this onnection an exhortation to the Hebrews to go out without the amp (ver. 13), that is, to sever all connection between themselves and ie sphere of the religious principles and life of the Old Testament srael; but it would exhibit a peculiar chain of ideas to exhort the lebrews to renounce all connection with their religious compatriots ecause certain Jews were striving to win them over to some opinions f their own, whether ascetic or otherwise, that had no connection ith the essential principles of Judaism.—It has been thought that ie Apostle, though he might have called the ceremonial rules of the ld Testament ritual "divers," would scarcely have called them strange," and hence it has been supposed that he refers either to lditions to these rules and amplifications of them, or to ascetic ndencies. This is a point of subordinate importance. The real oint is, that the Apostle connects these teachings with the "camp," id sees an antithesis between them and "grace," the principle of e new covenant. The Apostle might have called the principles id rules of the Old Testament ritual "strange," as alien to the faith Christ, particularly if the Hebrews under external influences, and om misunderstanding the true meaning of the sacrifice of Christ, drifting away from true ideas of it, were in danger of falling

*it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have bee

back upon them. The question whether the reference in "meats" (ver. 9) be to sacrificial meals or to clean and unclean foods is o little importance. The reference is mainly to the difference o principle—"grace" on the one hand, the principle of the Christia faith; and "meats" on the other, that of Judaism—as in anothe passage (ix. 10) the Author brings the whole Old Testament ritua into line with meats and drinks and divers washings. The con nection here (ver. 10, we have an altar, etc.) seems to imply tha sacrificial meals are referred to.

*A good thing;* or, it is good.—*Which have not . . . occupied;* o lit. in which they who walked were not profited. The words "wer not profited" seem to refer to practices long established, and not t mere novelties as of an ascetic abstinence;[1] comp. "unprofitable applied to the Mosaic ritual (vii. 18). The contrast drawn is one o principle—grace on the one hand, and meats on the other. Whethe the Old Testament ritual is regarded here as expanded and encruste over with practical growths through time and the subtleties of th legal and formal mind, may remain undecided. By grace, th thought how God's mind is towards men through Christ, and h fellowship with God through the Christian facts and ordinances—h this it is good that the heart be established, made stable and peace ful, as only it can be; not by the consciousness of having partake of certain meats. Proof sufficient of this is the fact, that they wh have sedulously walked in such rules have not been profited by them The Apostle refers to "teachings," not to practices; it is not implie that the Hebrews were in a locality where the practices were carrie on, they were being carried aside by the doctrines.

Ver. 10, etc. It might have seemed natural that the Apostle shoul have gone on to say, that we who partake of the Christian altar hav no need to seek establishing of the heart from having recourse t "meats." To say this would not have been enough. Therefore h turns the other face of the matter to us and says, that they who sti adhere to the system of meats are *precluded* from any participatio in the Christian sacrifice; the two cannot be commingled or com bined (ver. 10). This idea he supports by the typology of suc sacrifices as the sin-offering on the Day of Atonement. This sacrific was not partaken of like other sacrifices by Old Testament priest but was removed without the camp, the abode and sphere of the li of the Old Testament people, and consumed by fire. Here lay typical truth, to the effect that they who remain within the spher of the Old Testament people, with its ordinances and religious lif are precluded from participating in the true sin-offering (ver. 11 This type was verified in Jesus, the true sin-offering, who sufferc without the gate. Benefit and participation in the Christian sacrific

[1] The reading *walked* is doubtful. The Revisers' text does not even admit *wa* (present) into the margin, while Westcott and Hort receive it into the text.

10 occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no
11 right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of
those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by
12 the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp. Where-
fore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his

annot be enjoyed by those within the camp, those who adhere to
ne principles of the Old Testament religion; they who would share
s benefits must go without the camp, and renounce the religious
llowship of the Old Testament Israel (ver. 12). To do this will
ring with it reproach, even as (to look at the matter in another light,
iat of history) Christ's suffering without the gate, besides fulfilling
ne typical prophecy, was a token of His rejection by Israel and a
iark of contumely. Let us, then, who seek to participate in the
enefits of His sacrifice, go forth to Him without the camp of Israel,
earing His reproach. For this Jerusalem below, centre and type of
ne Old Testament faith, is not our home; we seek the Jerusalem
bove (vers. 13, 14).

Ver. 10. *We have an altar, i.e.* we who are Christians. Under "altar"
ne Writer has scarcely any particular object in view; he means a
acrifice of which we partake. If he had in mind anything special, it
ould be the cross; but according to the point which he desires to
iake, the cross without the gate corresponds to the place without the
amp where the sin-offering on the Day of Atonement was burnt, not
y any means to the altar. As the Old Testament sin-offering was
onsumed and destroyed by fire without the camp, so the Son was
ut to death without the gate. There seems no allusion in the ex-
ression, "we have an altar," to the sacrament of the Supper, though
is implied that Christians participate in their sacrifice and eat of
ieir altar.—*No right . . . sanctuary.* The most natural reference
to the Old Testament priests, though to these as representatives of
ne Old Testament Israel, and those continuing to adhere to the Old
estament ritual; comp. viii. 5 with x. 2. These have no right or
ower to eat of, that is, participate in, the Christian altar. Those who
ill regulate their religious life by the principles of the Old Testament
rdinances are precluded from any part in the offering of Christ.
roof of this follows from the typology of the sacrifice of the Day of
tonement.

Vers. 11, 12. According to the Law of the offering of the Day of
tonement, and those offerings whose blood was brought by the high
riest into the holiest, the flesh of such offerings was not partaken of
y the priests; it was removed outside the camp and consumed by
re. Those who had a right to eat of other sacrifices had no share
it; it was carried outside. Two elements were contained in this
pical ordinance—first, its circumstances were prophetic, and Christ
lfilled the prophecy,—that He might sanctify the people by His
ood, He suffered without the gate (ver. 12)—He was the true sin-
ffering; second, the ordinance also symbolized the deep truth that

13 own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth there-
14 fore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For
here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come

those remaining in the Old Testament community and adhering to its religious principles have no part in this true sin-offering.

Ver. 13. To partake in and share the benefits of the true sin-offering we must abandon the "camp," the abode of the unbelieving Israel, the sphere within which its religious ordinances and life have prevalence, and go forth unto Christ. To do this will doubtless entail reproach, for His suffering without the gate not only fulfilled the Scripture and verified the principle suggested by the ritual law itself, it was, as we know, the symbol of His being cast out of the community and religious life of the Old Testament Israel. Let us share His reproach and rejection.

Ver. 14. Let us do this, for here on earth we have no abiding city, we seek *one to come;* rather, the one that is to come, *i.e.* the Jerusalem above (xi. 10, xii. 22). Just as in ver. 13 the new idea was introduced from history, that the suffering of Jesus without the gate was a token of His rejection, and the exhortation combined the two ideas, to renounce the Old Testament system and to share the reproach of Christ; so in this verse the exhortation to abandon the Old Testament church and go forth unto Jesus widens into the idea that nowhere on earth have we an abiding city, much less in the Jerusalem of the Jewish people, we seek for the city that is to come.

A construction somewhat different is put by some interpreters on ver. 10. It is supposed that both members of that verse refer to Christians, the expression, "who serve the Tabernacle," describing them as having all priestly privileges. On that view what is said is this—the Christian altar is not one of which the Christian priest *eats* the benefit derived from it does not lie in the region of meats. That this is shown to be the case from the law of the sin-offering (ver. 11) verified in the history of Christ (ver. 12). This construction seems simpler, but there are objections to it:—(1) An unnatural emphasis is laid upon the word *eat*, which must be taken in its literal meaning, and a superficial sense is drawn from the passage. (2) The phrase, "serve the Tabernacle," is scarcely natural if said of Christians; neither does the phrase, "no right to eat," receive a suitable meaning on this construction. (3) The point of the passage seems to lie in the expression several times repeated, "without the camp." The point that literal eating is not the kind of benefit derived from the Christian altar hardly needed to be insisted on. The point is that those in the camp of Israel had no part in the sin-offering which was carried outside and consumed—an ordinance symbolizing the truth that those remaining in the camp of the Old Testament Israel, adhering to the principles of the Old Testament law, have no share in the benefits of the true sin-offering. *In such conditions* its advantages cannot be participated in. Only outside the camp of Israel can its benefits be shared. Then this idea naturally leads to the exhortation to go forth

5 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God
continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his
6 name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for
7 with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Obey them that
have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch
for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may
do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for

ithout the camp, to abandon the religious fellowship of Israel. This
hortation seems without motive or connection with the rest of the
assage on the construction of ver. 10 referred to.

It is to be observed that there is no reference in the passage to the
onement, except incidentally in the words, whose blood is brought
to the holiest (ver. 11). The Son's offering belongs to the class of
crifices so described; it is His blood brought by Him as High
riest into the holiest that sanctifies the People. The point raised is
e question, Under what conditions is the true sin-offering to be par-
cipated in after atonement has been made? and the answer is, Not
ithin the Old Testament camp, as the Old Testament ritual itself
owed, but outside of it, as the manner of the Son's suffering proved,
hich fulfilled the type, He having been crucified without the gate.

Vers. 15, 16. The true Christian sacrifice, praise to God and doing
od. The words *by him*, or **through** Him, are placed emphatically
the head of the sentence,—through Him, and not through the
edium of the Old Testament ritual ordinances. The Son is referred
, and the reference is sufficiently plain from "high priest" (ver. 11)
nd Jesus (ver. 12), as the finality of His offering is from the words,
anctify the People through His blood (ver. 12). The sacrifice the
hristian is to offer is, a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips (Hos. xiv. 2)
onfessing to His (*i.e.* God's) name. This is to be offered continually,
r the way into the holiest with such offering stands ever open (x. 19),
nd the offering is not one to be made at set times, but one which
xpresses the constant feeling of the mind towards God; and the
nspeakable gift calls forth continual thanks (2 Cor. ix. 15).—This is
ne side of the Christian sacrifice, but there must and will always be
nother side corresponding to it.—*To do good, i.e.* to the Christian
otherhood, or generally, in acts of mercy and kindness and sympathy;
nd *to communicate*, that is, impart of one's substance, to minister to
e necessities of those in want or in affliction (Rom. xv. 26; 2 Cor.
. 13; comp. Heb. vi. 10). These are the sacrifices well-pleasing to God,
rough Jesus Christ, the sin-offering and High Priest—towards God
ntinual thankfulness, towards men active benevolence in all its forms.

Ver. 17. **Exhortation to obey their present leaders.**

The exhortation to remember their former leaders ran out into an
hortation not to be led away by strange doctrines—for the remem-
ance of their former leaders was a remembrance of their teaching.
ow comes an appeal to the Hebrews to obey and submit to their
esent rulers. Under both exhortations there probably lies a covert
lusion to the circumstances of the community.—*Submit yourselves;*

18 you. Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscienc
19 in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech *you* t
rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the soonc

**or, yield to them.** Submit or "yield" suggests more than obey, implyi
that even should wills and opinions in regard to faith and practi
not be altogether in harmony, the teachers are to be yielded to. T
reason of this.—*They watch for, i.e.* in behalf of, *your souls.* T
figure of a shepherd may be present (ver. 20). The words do n
describe abstractly what the position of teachers is, but including th
refer especially to the actual character of the present leaders of t
Hebrews. They are to be yielded to, for first, *it is they that watch*
your souls—this is their position; and second, of their conduct th
shall have to give an account. The words imply that in the Apostl
estimation these teachers are like himself (ver. 18), upright in th
duty and conscious of its responsibilities. The words give a brief b
incisive sketch of the pastoral office in its relation to men and to Gc
—*Do this with joy*, that is, *watch* (not, give an account); obedien
and yielding to them will make their watching for you to be joyf
not grievous—they will see the cause of truth (ver. 9) and pea
(comp. xii. 14) prevail, and rejoice, not that they have the pr
eminence, but in seeing the good of the community. The Apos
assumes that the teachers represent, in the present condition of t
Hebrews, truth and good order.—*Is unprofitable for you;* or, **would
unprofitable** . . . Watching with grief would be unprofitable for t
Hebrews, for it would imply a condition of unquiet and dissiden
of opinion and feeling hurtful in itself, and the responsibility
which would lie on them.

Ver. 18. Exhortation to pray for the Writer.—*Pray for us.* The
does not imply that the Writer combined others with himself, for
passes into the singular in ver. 19. The request naturally follo
the exhortation in reference to their present teachers. The Writ
though not one of their ordinary teachers, feels himself one in mi
with these teachers, and has a position of influence in the commun
to which he writes. He desires their prayers, and considers he m
receive them as one having a good conscience in all things towa
them.—*For we trust;* or, **are persuaded.**—*Willing to live honest*
or, **wishing to behave** (demean myself) **rightly.** The allusion to
purity of conduct, and strong assertion of his consciousness of
in regard to them and all things, when he is petitioning for th
prayers, implies that some suspicions may have attached to him
the minds of some of them. These suspicions would natura
refer to his great freedom in regard to Jewish practices.

Ver. 19. *But I . . . the rather;* or, **and I the more earnestly** (ii.
**beseech** (exhort) **you.**—*That I may be restored* . . . These wo
imply a former residence of the Writer among the Hebrews.
contemplated returning to them,—a return desired by himself, and
which he assumes will be acceptable to them,—and he beseeches th
to help it by their prayers. When he wrote his return was hinder

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the

though the nature of the hindrance is not stated; it does not appear, however, ver. 23, to have been any restraint such as imprisonment.

Vers. 20, 21. **A prayer of the Apostle in behalf of the Hebrews.**

The Apostle having sought the prayers of the Hebrews for his speedy return to them, prays God on their behalf; and it is probable that his prayer is not general, but has reference to the special conditions of the community. The words run literally: and the God of peace, who brought up (or, back) from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus . . . The verse seems connected with the previous verses, and the same undertone of reference to the condition of the Hebrews, their relations to their teachers and to the Writer, that characterizes these verses, also marks it—being heard in the words "God of peace," and "Great Shepherd of the sheep." Ver. 20 describes the aspect or character under which God is prayed to, and ver. 21 describes the work which the Apostle prays that God would effect, and, naturally, the work corresponds to the character. God is prayed to as the God of peace, that is, who works peace, Rom. xv. 33, xvi. 20; Phil. iv. 9; 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Comp. ver. 21, and chap. xii. 14, etc. The further designation, Who brought up . . . the Great Shepherd of the sheep, is not another distinct appellation, but one at least in the same line with "God of peace." As the context refers to the rulers of the community, the allusion to the Great Leader and Ruler of the People (Ps. lxxx. 1; comp. 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 4), who is over the house of God (iii. 5), probably bears also upon the condition of the community. Bringing up from the dead (Rom. x. 7) includes making the Son head of the New Testament community, as appears from the words, "Great Shepherd of the sheep," and "our Lord Jesus." God is prayed to as the God of peace, and as He who has set our Lord Jesus over His house.—The words, "in the blood of an eternal covenant," do not go closely with "brought up from the dead," as if they explained the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection in itself is not the point here, but the whole elevation of the Son to be the Great Shepherd of the sheep. And the idea that the resurrection of the Son was itself an effect of the blood of the covenant, being "the first of the blessings of the covenant," is hardly to be looked for in the Epistle, being a much more precise conception than the general "crowned with glory on account of His suffering of death," ii. 9. The words, "in the blood," etc., go immediately with "the Great Shepherd of the sheep," and state through what or on the ground of what He is the Great Shepherd above all others, viz. the blood of an everlasting covenant (ix. 15). God is the God of peace, who works peace and all blessings to the New Testament community; this He does through Jesus Christ (ver. 21): in virtue of the blood of the new covenant He was made the head of the new dispensation. Comp. Acts xx. 28. For the phraseology comp. Sept. Isa. lxiii. 11.

21 blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in eve
good work to do his will, working in you that which is we
pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glo
22 for ever and ever. Amen. And I beseech you, brethre
suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a lett
23 unto you in few words. Know ye that *our* brother Timoth
is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see yo
24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saint
25 They of Italy salute you. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

Ver. 21. *Make you perfect*, *i.e.* make you complete, equip you, prepare you.—*In every good work;* rather, **good thing.** This ver contains a description of the thing prayed for—it is equipment every good thing to do God's will. It is God who works this; but is through Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of the sheep. Examples how He does so may be seen in ii. 18, iv. 14, etc.—It is difficult say whether the Doxology be to God or Jesus Christ. On the o hand, the great subject of the two verses is God. On the other, t Great Shepherd is lifted up into striking prominence in both vers as He through whom God works all blessed effects in the communi The feeling of commentators carries them with equal decisivene some one way and some another; 2 Tim. iv. 18; 2 Pet. iii. 18; Rev i.

Ver. 22. The Apostle in conclusion begs his readers to bear wi his "word of exhortation," *i.e.* his letter, which he so names.—*For . in few words.* Another reason, besides others, for bearing with it, is brevity. This is said comparatively, in consideration of the grav of the circumstances and the weight of the subjects handled. T letter, it is said (Moulton), might be read aloud in less than an hou

Ver. 23. *Know ye . . .* Others render *ye know*, but it is more p bable that the Author is communicating a piece of intelligen "Set at liberty" probably refers to an imprisonment of Timothy, which no other historical notice occurs.—*Shortly*, *i.e.* apparent before the Author is compelled or finds it convenient to leave. that case he would bring Timothy with him. The reference Timothy indicates that the Author was on a footing of friendsh with Pauline circles.

Ver. 24. Salutation to the heads of the Hebrew community. So have found in the word "all" an intimation that there were vari classes of leaders, *e.g.* some Jewish and some Gentile; but such inference seems too large to found on such a word.—*They of Ita* Those belonging to Italy. Whether the Apostle was *in* Italy a sent the salutation of the Italian brethren, or was in some local where Italians were present, whose salutations he joined with own, cannot be decided from the words. On the last supposit the probability would be that the letter was written *to* Italy.

Ver. 25. The same closing benediction, Tit. iii. 15; comp. Col. iv.

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